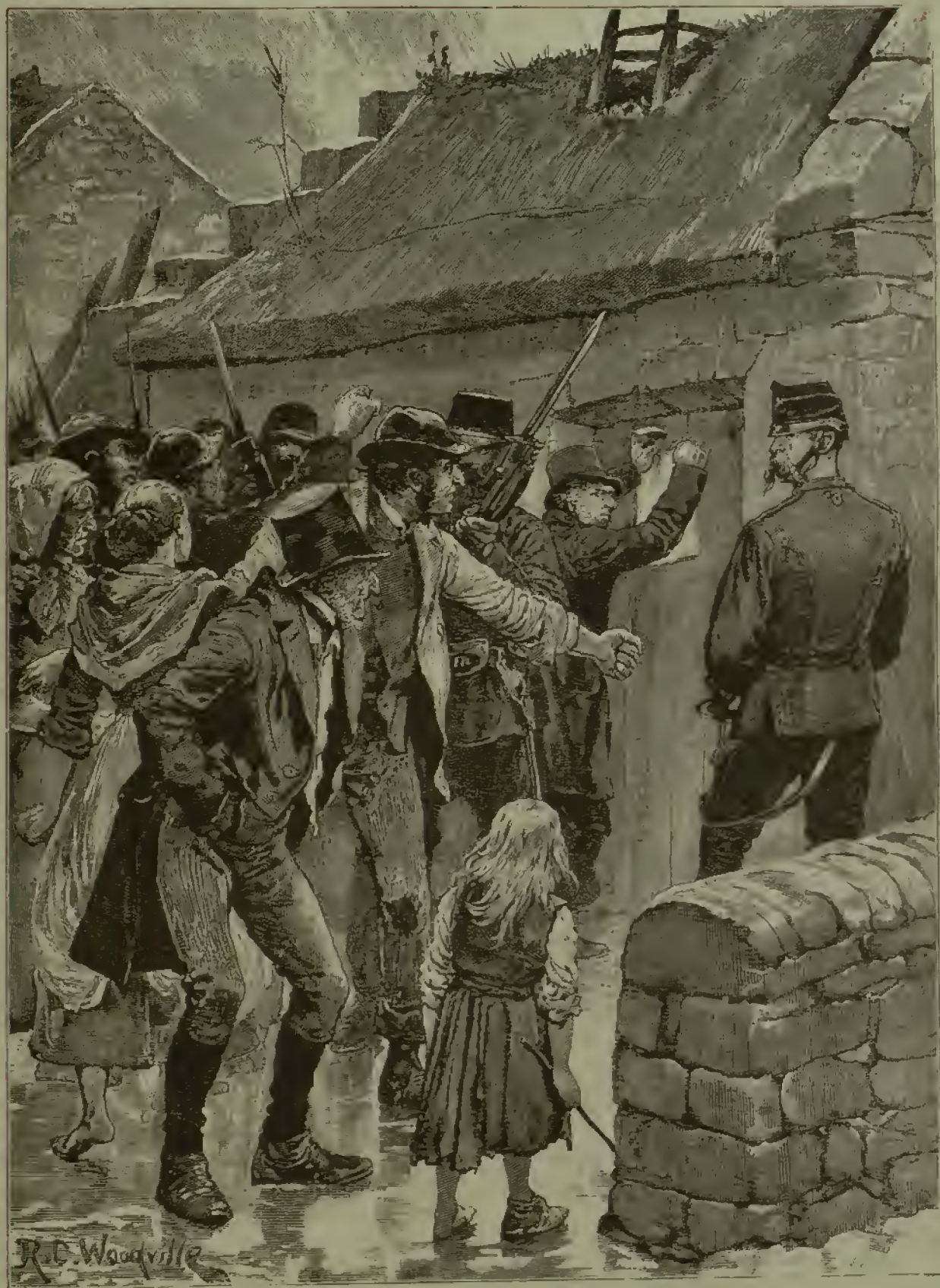


ONE SHILLING

IRISH PICTURES



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WALLIS MACKAY, J. PROCTER, & R. C. WOODVILLE.

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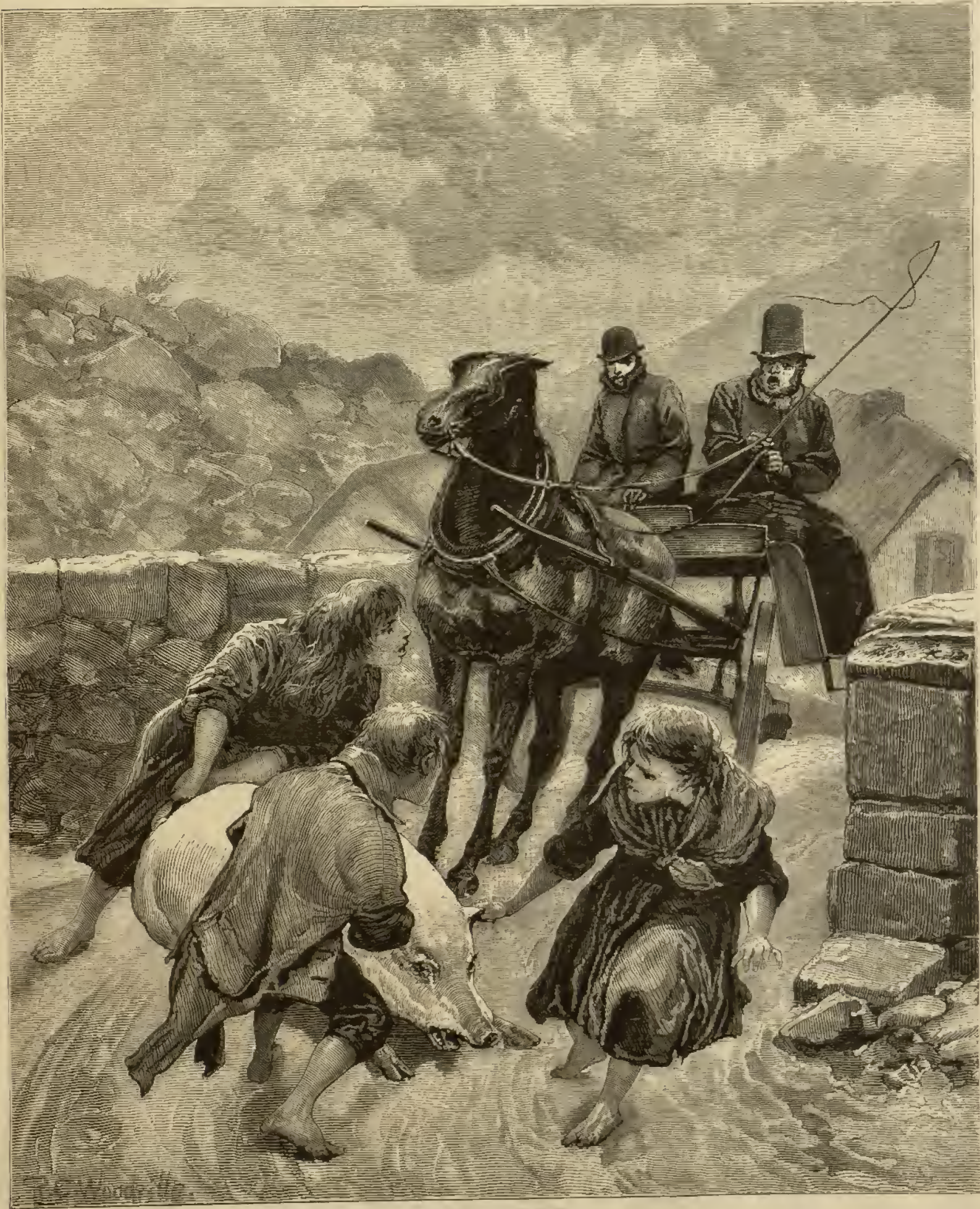
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IRISH PICTURES.



AN IRISH OBSTRUCTIONIST.

AN IRISH OBSTRUCTIONIST.

ONE of the greatest difficulties encountered by those who have endeavoured either to coerce the natives of Ireland to assimilate themselves to English ideas, or else to mitigate after their own fashion the evils under which the poorer classes were labouring, has arisen from "obstruction." The quicker temper of the Celt, however, leads him to construe the word very differently from the more sluggish Saxon. With him, obstruction is not the passive resistance of the *vis inertiae*, but assumes a more lively form, culminating in Land Leaguings and Boycotting. Obstruction is just now apt to assail the stranger who visits Ireland in many forms, one of the most amusing of which is depicted in the accompanying engraving. Our tourist's ear is brought to a sudden halt by the vagaries of an elephantine porker, which insists on taking up the best part of the time of Her Majesty's House of Commons, and blocking the progress of the chariot of legislation. Observe the porker. He does more quickly enough, if he chose, only he won't. He could not realise that conventional idea of the Irishman's pig, which was so thin that his master had to tie a knot in his tail to keep him from slipping through the cracks in his cabin-door. His owner has

evidently not reared him on the plan of feeding him only every other day, in order that such a course of alternate fasting and repletion may result in the production of fine streaky bacon, displaying those accurately defined alternate layers of fat and lean so dear to epicures. Our pig is full fed and portly, as becomes "the gentleman who pays the rent," or rather who paid it when such a proceeding was in fashion. But at need, he could really clear a 4-foot stone wall like a greyhound, and for all his obstinately affected resistance to the sturdy young peasants who are trying to drag him out of the way of the car, he has like all his countrymen a keen appreciation of number one, and a firm determination as far as lies in his power to save his bacon.

SKETCHES AT KILDARE.

THE sketches of the Duke of Leinster's tenants, and of the wretched cabin on the ducal domain at Kildare were taken ten years ago, still their counterparts are to be found at the present day in most parts of Ireland, the peasantry of which are, as Mr. Charles Russell truly says, "the worst fed, the worst clad, and the worst housed of any in Europe"—worse fed and housed, as he told the House of Commons, than the horses and dogs in honourable members' stables and kennels. It was in the spring of 1870 that we went from Dublin to Kildare on hearing it

rumoured that the wholesale eviction of forty-two families, numbering 162 individuals in all, was about to take place at the instance of the Duke of Leinster's agent. We learned, however, on the spot that no written notices had been served although numbers of his grace's miserable tenants averred that they had received notice by word of mouth from the coachman of the Duke's agent, who, in their eyes was of only little less importance than his master, who in his turn was almost as great a man as the Duke himself. No one associated the Duke with the threatened evictions, for he was universally spoken of as one of the best landlords in the sister kingdom. Still, the condition of some of his Kildare tenants—Kildare, from which his eldest son takes his title of Marquis, was most pitiable at the epoch in question. A more starving, ragged, ill-housed community than the occupants of the wretched mud-cabins that lined one side of one of the principal streets in Kildare, it was hardly possible to conceive.

One cabin, occupied by a widow, a grown-up son of twenty, another of about sixteen, and a daughter of about ten, consisted of a single room merely, not more than eight feet by ten feet, with mud walls and floor of course, and no other furniture beyond a rickety table and a broken bench, an iron pot, a kettle swung by a chain over a scrap of turf fire that might have been put easily into a pint pot, and before which a slim bread loaf

was slowly baking on a griddle: two or three tea-cups, a couple of half-broken plates, a jug with broken spout and without a handle, were the sole household utensils in the place. There was neither bedstead nor bedding, but the family slept in their clothes on the bare ground with a few scraps of ragged drapery over them. There were puddles of water in different places on the mud floor, and the planks of the door nearly tumbled asunder every time the latter was opened or shut. A sickle was slung to one of the beams of the roof, and a spade stood in a corner, behind the door, by a handful of straw on which the donkey slept at night, serving as a sort of living barricade to prevent the door from being blown in in windy weather. The widow who occupied the cabin, although in rags and with bare legs and feet, was a person of some intelligence, with a good choice of language, and had taught her children to read, her idea being that "there was nothing like education to get on in the world." Getting on, from this poor creature's point of view, was no doubt limited to a certain although insufficient supply of food and fuel all the year round. The rent of this hovel of hers, which before the establishment of the Curragh Camp, only a few miles distant, was 4d. per week merely, had since been increased to 10s. The Irish peasant who has to pay £2 3s. 4d. per annum for a bare shelter from the elements may well be dissatisfied with his condition.

IN THE WAKE OF RORY.

RATHER more than ten years ago—just before the passing of the Irish Land Bill, when agrarian crime was rife in Ireland much as it is now, and a Peace Preservation Act prohibited persons being abroad at night time in the proclaimed districts unless "on lawful business or occasion," when, besides agitation for tenant-right, there was a Fenian scare, and continual seizures of arms were being made at the different ports, the present writer journeyed through the Central and Western counties of Ireland in the wake of the mythical Rory of the Hills of that epoch. He remembers when in county Meath, where the peasantry took him for a detective and the police for a Fenian, hearing the enquiry, "Any shooting in your part of the country?" addressed quite naturally across the hotel dinner-table at Kells, as though the month were September instead of March, and partridges rather than landowners and their agents were the game referred to. The enquiry, moreover, brought forth no end of responses, the majority of those present having each his story to tell. One related to a small landed proprietor at Killallen, a few miles distant, who had



A VILLAGE GENERAL STORE.

been shot the previous evening while sitting with his family in his own chimney corner. The second case was that of a farmer renting over a couple of hundred acres, at Fartha, less than half a dozen miles from Kells, and who had received a heavy charge of duck-shot in his face and head the night before. The next case was that of a neighbour of the foregoing, who had had his

cabin forcibly entered, and his gun carried off, by a party of disguised armed men, while another was that of an agent to a well-known Irish nobleman whose car had been stopped near Fartha in broad daylight by four men armed with bludgeons. Luckily for him he had his revolver "convenient," as the Irish say, or murder or maltreatment would have been his fate. On the same evening, an innkeeper of Virginia, also in the neighbourhood of Fartha, while riding home on a car in company with the parish priest, was surprised at one of a party of men jumping up beside him and informing him that if he did not let out and let a certain field belonging to him at so much per acre Rory would pay him an early visit. He was reminded that he had already received one warning—his grave had been significantly dug in the field in question—and was told that if he disregarded the second one, his life would certainly pay the forfeit. A few days before, a woman styling herself Rory's Daughter had called at the house of a grazing farmer, on the pretence that her papa and brothers were too much engaged on similar errands to come themselves, and enjoined him to give up certain lands which he had in grass, or unpleasant consequences would assuredly follow. A small farmer, too, who had paid £280 for the transfer of the right to occupy merely twelve acres of land, had received notice, the day after he had parted with his money, not to enter into possession, or Rory would certainly eject him with a bullet. The terrified farmer had come into Kells that very day to consult a Dublin lawyer as to how he could get his money back again, and was sadly chap-fallen at discovering that he had no remedy.

Two cases in the adjoining county of Westmeath were likewise referred to, one being that of a clergyman twice fired upon as he was returning home from a rent-collecting errand at Clonfert; and the other relating to a land steward who had been shot at through a hole in a high wall while proceeding on a car with his family to church at Clara. The "tumbling over" of landlords or agents on their way to church was so favourite a pastime with Rory and his men, that in many parts of the county the gentry were in the habit of attending Divine service with a couple of policemen, armed to the teeth, riding with them on their cars. We remember indeed having seen several such cars standing outside the church of Kilkenny West, the successor of

"The distant church that tops the neighbouring hill" of Goldsmith's "Deserted Village," situated some couple of miles from the town of Athlone.



SEIZURE OF ARMS AT THE DUBLIN STEAMSHIP COMPANY'S WAREHOUSES.



SOME OF THE DUKE OF LEINSTER'S KILDARE TENANTS.

It seemed from the foregoing string of outrages as though the "rough and ready roving boys of Rory of the Hills," were bent upon making the most of their time—in county Meath at any rate—before the new Peace Preservation Act came into operation. All over the county most well-to-do people having naught to do with land, either as owners, agents, and sometimes as tenants even, went about with loaded revolvers as though they were in some Far Western State of the American Union instead of in the great cattle-grazing county of Ireland. To such a pass had things come that, in the purely country districts, strangers in broadcloth were set down as detectives, and strangers in frieze as assassins; and a good many landlords, and a vast number of agents, went about in mortal dread.

All over the county you were continually coming upon some locality which had its particular story of outrage or crime of comparatively recent date. It was impossible to drive from one town to another without your car-driver pointing out by the way some spot where murder had been either committed or attempted, or some dastardly intimidation practised. Take, for instance, Kells, the second town in the county, surrounded on all sides by gentlemen's seats. Streets and suburbs alike were paraded, day and night, by armed constabulary, and its poor-house was crowded with companies of the 40th. In whichever direction you drove out of Kells, the car-boy would be certain to point out some wall or hedge behind which the assassin had lain in wait, some field, the occupant of which had been warned by a threatening notice or a newly dug grave; some house, the owner of which had been menaced, savagely beaten, or fired upon while seated at his fireside.

Some few miles from Kells, just below Moynalty, you were shown the hole cut in the hedge, through

which Mr. O'Farrell's steward was shot at while opening a gate by the side of the road leading to his own house. He escaped because only a minute before his wife had unconcernedly removed a peg which had evidently been placed in the latch to make the gate difficult to open, and thus afford the ruffians an opportunity of taking snuff at their victim. In another direction, the cabin was pointed out of a little farmer named Brughy,

which had been burst into on Kells fair night by four men, who, by dint of threats, had made Brughy promise to give up certain land, rented by him for grazing purposes. In a third direction, just across the borders of the county, and by the banks of a beautiful lake several miles in extent, is the clean and thriving little town of Virginia, forming quite a pleasant oasis in a general desert of dirt and decay; and here the landlord of the

hotel, the miller, and the keeper of the general store—that is to say, the three most prosperous people in the place—had had their graves dug in three several fields on the same night, written notices stuck into cleft sticks being left behind, warning them by name that the fields in question were to be broken up and let out in patches to the poor for tillage, within eight days from that date, or the graves would be swiftly provided with tenants. This was the same hotel-keeper who had been threatened by a party of men as he was leaving the railway station, in company with the priest on the mail car. The priest, being a man of peace, naturally did not interfere; the car driver, of course, dared not; and the hotel-keeper, being in effect single-handed and unarmed, gave a half-promise to do what was required of him, and the car was allowed to proceed on its way.

Unquestionably many menaces of this description proceeded from persons who had no intention of putting their threats into execution, but who, profiting by the panic which prevailed, made use of these means of alarm to compass certain ends of their own. Instances, however, were so numerous, where threats had been followed by deeds, that the boldest hardly dared disregard them, but lived as now in a state of siege, as it were, with their houses barred and revolvers always within reach.



A MUD CABIN ON THE DUCAL DOMAIN AT KILDARE.



GOING TO CHURCH "UNPROTECTED" IN IRELAND.

Although all the outrages of which we have been speaking were connected in some way with the land, hardly any of them were the result of evictions, and were not therefore to be excused on that score. When a tenant, by his own unassisted labour and industry, and with the permission or connivance of the owner of the estate, has reclaimed waste land or worthless bog, has built himself a house upon it, and a shed for his goat or ass or cow, has fenced it in, drained it, manured it, however clumsily or scantily, and thus turned a plot of ground not worth 2s. an acre into fields worth 20s. or 30s., it is simply impossible for him not to feel a sort of ownership in those fields and buildings, and it is equally impossible for either a just landlord or a fair bystander not to recognize both the naturalness and the equity of this feeling. It is impossible too not to recognize that he has a claim either to enjoy the fertility he has virtually created for a period long enough to repay him for his toil, or to be reimbursed according to some equitable scale for the improvement he has wrought and the cabins and sheds he has erected. If, therefore, when the enterprising tenant has completed his work of reclamation, and finished his humble dwelling and his poor offices, and has converted a piece of shaking bog or a barren hill-side—which before could only starve a goat—into a farm on which a family can live in decent poverty, the owner of the soil turns him out of his holding without paying him the full value for everything that he has done, or demands such an extreme rent as almost amounts to eviction, then, under cover of the law,

a great wrong is done, a cruel injury committed, and it is not surprising that the sufferers should have recourse to a sharp and fearful remedy.

ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION OF MR. NICHOLSON.

As we drove from Kells to the scene of the outrage at Killallen we passed on our way—about a mile outside the town, and less than that distance from the railway station—the spot where Mr. Nicholson, a large landowner of the neighbourhood, was fired at one afternoon in the autumn of the preceding year. In a wall by the side of a pleasant suburban road, along which cars and carriages are running from morning till night, and nursemaids occasionally trundle babies in perambulators, a large notch was pointed out where the barrel of the blunderbuss, from which the slugs intended for Mr. Nicholson were discharged, had rested. Through the precipitancy of the assassin the charge missed that gentleman, but killed his coachman. The armed guard, who invariably accompanied Mr. Nicholson in his drives, was on the look-out in the rumble behind, and at once let fly at a couple of men whom he saw scampering off up the rising ground, but missed his aim. The dying coachman and the restless horses requiring all his care, he had to give up any idea of pursuit. Not a hundred yards from the spot we noticed a little cabin, whose doors and windows commanded a view of the field along which the assassins made their

escape; but its occupants, as well as those of other neighbouring cabins pretended that they saw no men running, and heard no shot fired.

A MEATH COUNTRY GENTLEMAN AT HOME AND ON A VISIT.

HALF a mile hence is Ballybrath, the seat of Mr. Nicholson, standing back from the road in a well timbered park overgrown with game, and which, with other land on the same estate, extends for a distance of fully three miles along the Oldcastle road. This gentleman had long been unpopular in the neighbourhood, chiefly because of his attempts to eject a small tenant-farmer, who was supported not merely by the sympathy but the subscriptions of people in various parts of the county, and had foiled his landlord in two several courts of law. So strong was the popular feeling, that not a grazier dared feed a single head of cattle in Mr. Nicholson's park. Ever since his attempted assassination a regular post of armed police had been established at Mr. Nicholson's house; and in such a state of terror did the old gentleman live, that he rarely ventured outside his own domain, about which he promenade armed with a loaded rifle and surrounded by a posse of constables, all with their carbines at full cock. Policemen guarded the approaches and entrances to the mansion; there were constables on the gravelled walks, in the shrubberies, on the lawn, and in the stable-yard; and no strangers were admitted into Mr. Nicholson's presence, or even



A MEATH COUNTRY GENTLEMAN TAKING HIS DAILY CONSTITUTIONAL.

inside the house, which was barricaded and guarded more like a fortress, than a country gentleman's mansion. When visiting the Marquis of Headfort, whose seat is only a short distance off, Mr. Nicholson thought it safer to go on foot, rather than in a vehicle; and the cortège, as it was described to us by one of the Marquis's tenants, was certainly a strange one. First came an armed constable as a kind of scout, then a couple of others abreast, then two more constables, with Mr. Nicholson in between them—all being armed to the teeth. A posse of policemen in a car, with a ladder slung at the side of it to enable them to scale any wall from behind which an assassin might fire, brought up the rear. Such was the way in which during the spring of 1870 unpopular landlords paid visits in county Meath.

MONUMENT TO A VICTIM OF RIBBONISM.—THE OUTRAGE AT KILLALLEN.

On the outskirts of Mr. Nicholson's well preserved estate, is Robertstown, and a few hundred yards beyond a plain monument, surmounted by a



THE SPOT WHERE MR. NICHOLSON WAS SHOT AT.

stone cross, stands in the hedge, as it were by the wayside, with an inscription recording that it was raised in memory of Richard Connell, the victim some years since of an atrocious act of Ribbonism. On the rise of the hill is the little Catholic Chapel of Kilskeer, on returning home from attending mass at which one Sunday morning, and on the very spot where his monument now stands, the unfortunate man was dragged from his jaunting car and beaten to death with bludgeons by a party of men with blackened faces, within sight of his own home and before the very eyes of his relatives and neighbours, none of whom dared interpose, or dared identify, even if they knew, the perpetrators of this barbarous deed.

A little to the left, among the hills, lies the small town of Athboy, where threatening letters to land-owners and tenant-farmers had lately been extremely rife, while in advance is the village of Kilskeer, on clearing which one entered a somewhat wild-looking country, carefully enough cultivated however over such portions as had been turned up by the plough, and having



DALRATH HOUSE, COUNTY MEATH.

considerable tracts of land which had been reclaimed from the bog. In the lowlands of the more extensive fields were patches of bog, to the verge of which the spade or plough penetrated, and as the black earth was thrown up by the latter, a procession of melancholy-looking crows would follow closely in its wake, marching in single file along each newly formed furrow in search of aught that the ploughshare might turn up. The labouring men, who were either middle-aged or old—the younger ones having all emigrated to America—had a peculiarly sullen air, and answered curtly when spoken to. The women and children looked half-starved and very wretched. The pig alone seemed well fed and contented; he at least looked as though he lived on the fat of the land, and was certainly as much cared for as a pet child.

It was in this forbidding district that Crawford, the small farmer and agent who had been shot at and dangerously wounded, resided. Though a man of some substance, his homestead was nothing more than one of



MONUMENT TO A VICTIM OF RIBBONISM AT KILSKEER.

those little stone cabins common to the peasant class, he had, however, just built a substantial stone farmhouse for his own occupation. The two stood side by side on rising ground, having another little farmhouse a meadow's length of them, and a larger farm, hardly ten minutes' walk distant. On our arrival we saw that the house was guarded by a party of police, and learned that the injured man had never spoken since he was fired at, which is matter of no surprise, since portions of his nose, jaw, tongue, and under lip had been shot clean away by the large, jagged pellets that passed sideways through his cheek. The room in which the wounded man was sitting when the shots were fired was only some seven feet square, and lighted by a single little window through which a man could with difficulty thrust his head. Crawford had just taken his seat on the settle by the fire-side when he was shot: the gun had evidently been fired quite close to the window, which was shattered to atoms. The missiles struck Crawford in the shoulder as well as



CRAWFORD'S CABIN AND FARM HOUSE AT KILLALLEN.

in the face, and others flew about the apartment, passing over the head of Crawford's wife, who was stooping to pick up a newspaper, piercing the serving-boy's coat, and penetrating the cradle in which the baby was being rocked to sleep by an old nurse.

The wife and brother of the wounded man entertained no kind of suspicion of any human being. All the neighbours agreed that Crawford was a most inoffensive man, who had never quarrelled with any one, and who had made no alteration in the farm to which he succeeded on the death of his father a year or two since. A neighbouring farmer, clad in the old-fashioned frieze tail coat, yellow cord breeches, grey stockings, and wearing one of those remarkably tall hats with extremely narrow brims for which certain Irishmen exhibit so strange a partiality, was most emphatic in praise of Crawford:—"He was a good Protestant and a good neighbour, and truth it is I that am a Roman Catholic who says it. As for the Irish they



ROOM IN CRAWFORD'S CABIN.

are so bad that nothing the Government can do will be too severe for them." Like all the rest of his class, this old gentleman, when talking to a stranger and a Saxon, professed to welcome the Coercion Bill; though whether he was giving expression to his real sentiments is more than doubtful. It was the opinion of the police that the majority of small farmers in this part of Ireland, though not active agents in keeping alive the system of terror which so largely prevailed, were secret sympathisers in the "Rory" movement. The police theory was that the object of Rory and his men, was not merely the execution of a sort of wild justice in cases where anything like oppression on the part of landlords or agents had been practised, but mainly to prevent rents from being raised. Farmers of fifty acres and more had been and were still all doing remarkably well, and they entertained a fear that the landlords would take advantage of their prosperity to exact higher rents unless effectually terrified into not doing so.



REILLEY'S FARM HOUSE AT FARTHA.

THE WOUNDED FARMER AT FARTHA.

ABOUT half a dozen miles from Kells, on the ridge of a hill that rises from some considerable tracts of bogland, are a few scattered farmhouses and cabins forming the village of Farthia.

In a tolerably well-to-do-looking homestead of the group there was living, in company with his sister, a fine hearty old fellow named Reilley, who farmed something like a couple of hundred acres on lease, forty of which—a very large proportion on a Meath farm—were under tillage. This land had been in the

occupation of himself and his father before him for upwards of a hundred years. Living on terms of amity with his neighbours and the labourers in his employ, he dreamt he had never an enemy in the world until he was suddenly disturbed in this comfortable persuasion.



PADDY'S REFLECTION.

It appears that one evening, just as dusk had set in, a party of Cavan men, primed with whisky, came to his house, one flourishing a pistol in his hand, and another armed with a carbine, which he pointed at Reilley's breast, at the same time demanding his gun of him. Reilley tried to draw the party into another room to search for it, hoping, when their backs were turned, to get possession of it himself, and teach them, as he phrased it, "the difference between mutton and goat." But one of the number caught sight of the end of the barrel above a pile of banalboxes, and at once seized on it. Having got what they wanted, they left to visit other farmhouses of the neighbourhood on similar errands. Two hours afterwards a man entered the farmyard, and after snapping several percussion caps, retired.

Reilley did not relish this piece of bravado, following so closely upon the loss of his gun, and, reasoning with himself, apprised the police of what had taken place, begging them to keep a watch at night on some particular cabin in the neighbourhood, which he indicated. This, however, was thought to be unnecessary by the officer in command of the adjacent post; and a little after eight o'clock the following evening, while Reilley was absorbed in the newspaper, he was startled by receiving a charge of duck-shot in his face and head from a gun fired through the window-panes. The charge shattered his spectacles, and blinded him for the moment with the flow of blood; but, owing to the muzzle of the gun having been pointed at too great a distance from the window, no more serious harm was done. Although there are several cottages within five minutes' walk of the spot,

and a couple of constables heard the report and hastened in the direction of it, Reilley's assailant got clean off, and the police never arrived at so much as a suspicion as to the real culprit. The sergeant of constabulary observed to us that not an individual would ever render them the smallest aid, many from sympathy with the perpetrators of the crimes, the remainder through fear of incurring their vengeance. "We have not a single friend," said he, "among the whole of the small farmers or the peasantry for miles around. Reilley himself knew his assailant well enough, but dared not denounce him. Walking with us to the end of a field, he pointed stealthily over his shoulder at one of his own men, who was engaged in ploughing. "That's the fellow who shot me," said he; "but don't hint a word about it, or I shall very soon be a dead man."

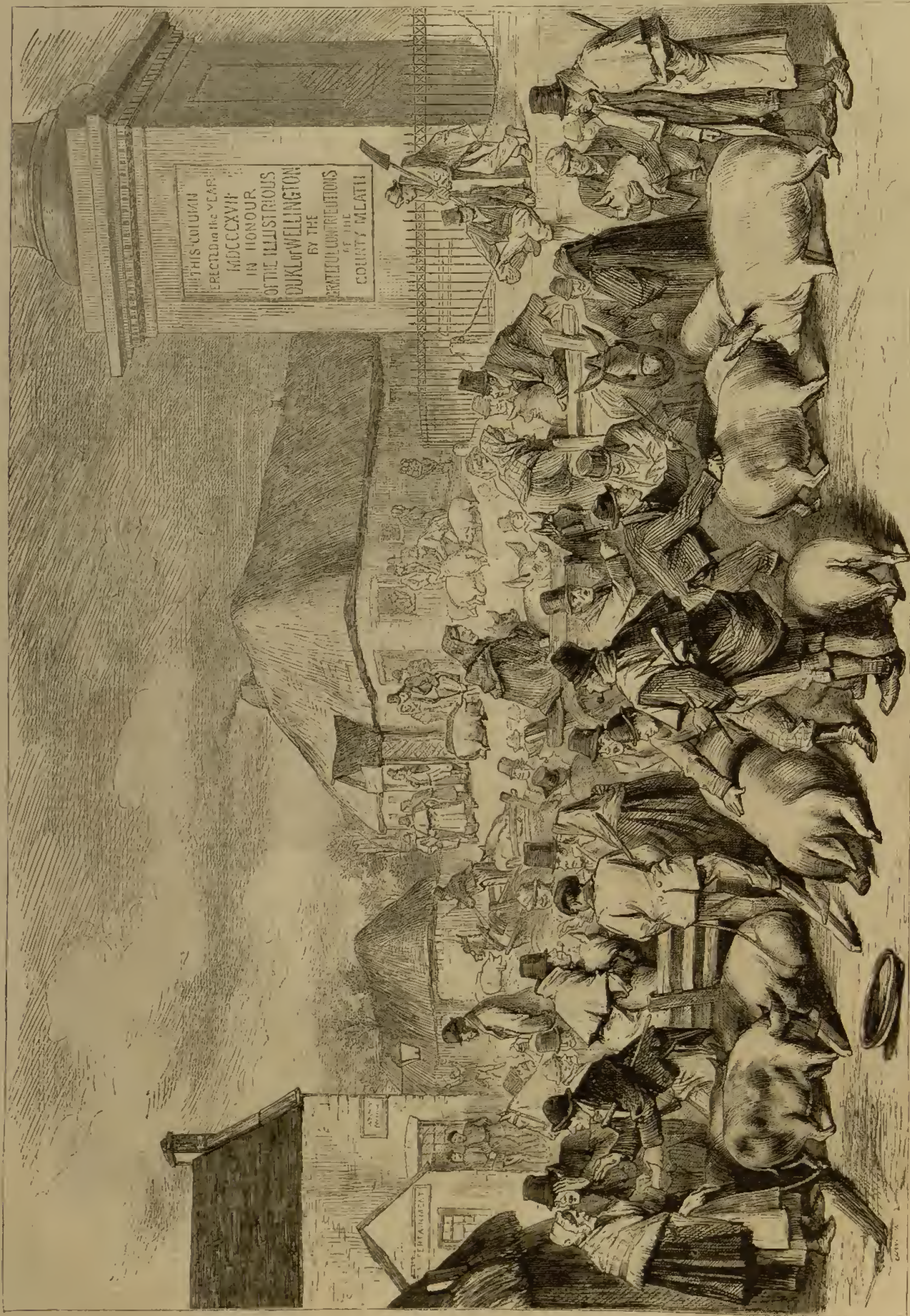


FIG. FAIR AT TRIM, COUNTY MEATH.

Many of these outrages were no doubt, instigated by the Ribbon societies having their head-quarters in the adjoining county of Westmeath, and which, while counting adherents and supporters among the farming classes and sympathisers among the

small tradesmen in the towns, recruited their ranks chiefly from farm servants and daily labourers. The latter were under the absolute control of a few individuals—the heads of the society—who, although well known to the police, enjoyed perfect

impunity, as either from fear or sympathising connivance, no one dared give evidence against them. Ribbonism was originally exclusively agrarian in its operations, and confined itself to interposing its vindictive arm between landlord and

tenant, but afterwards took to regulating many of the relations of social life, and succeeded in establishing such a complete reign of terror that its mere hints were effectual in cases where violence used formerly to be resorted to.

A CAR-DRIVER ON THE DOINGS OF RORY.

As we drove back to Kells, the car-driver—as through a Paddy as could be met with in a week's drive through the Emerald Isle—was loud in his condemnation of the cowardly practice of carrying off a man's gun and then shooting him unawares, and he seemed thoroughly to sympathize with the old farmer, whom, he admitted, nobody had a word to say against. But when we came to remark that the strange feature of many of these outrages was the apparent absence of all motive on the part of those who perpetrated them, Mike burst into a loud chuckle. "Devil a bit of reason have they for tumbling the poor fellows over; that's the fun of the thing!" said he. At this precise moment we passed a sturdy little old man on the road, with his head bandaged up and his face covered with sticking-plaster. "That's Tim Macover," said Mike, "whom they murdered." "Murdered! what do you mean?" we asked. "Truth, that ould gentleman there; didn't ye see the patches on his face? It's him they murdered, Sunday night three weeks; Rory and the 'boys' gave him a bating for half an hour wid their sticks. He keeps a little shop down the road, and sells tay and tobacco and them sort of things." "But aren't there any houses near; didn't any one come to help him?" "Devil a one—devil a soul. He says there were thirty of the boys; but devil a bit can he tell why they bate him. Ha! ha! ha! devil a ha'porth does he know." And Mike went off into a monstrous fit of laughter—stamping his feet on the splash-board of the car, and rolling from side to side in the intensity of his glee, so that one expected every moment to see him fall a victim to his misplaced merriment, and pitch headlong into the road.

A PIG FAIR AT TRIM.

THE half dozen towns of the great grazing County of Meath all present unmistakable evidences of decay. In the doorway of the principal hotel in the principal town of the county one found five dirty, ragged beggar-women and one sturdy beggar-man installed, quite as though it were their accustomed quarters. Those who desire to know how dirty and ragged a genuine Irish beggar-woman can be, need go no further than Navan for a specimen. The male member of the fraternity, whose garments, if not of the same brilliant colours as Harlequin's suit, were composed of quite as many patches, implored our charity on the plea that his "backbone and stomach were mating with hunger and thirst." The coffee-room of the Navan hotel commanded a view of the two principal streets, with half a dozen dilapidated tenements at their point of junction. This corner was the privileged lounging-ground of all the lazy ruffians in the place, and no fouler and lazier are to be found in County Meath. At Trim—which one cannot help associating with Tristram Shandy, or with Uncle Toby rather, and which is the assize town of Meath—there is only



OLD COUPLE AT CROSSAKEEL.

a single hotel; still, it is unique: you sit on dirt, you eat off dirt, and you sleep in dirt. The morning being wet, half a truss of straw was flung down on the bare boards of the passage to do duty for a mat—a piece of fastidiousness which the filthy state of the uncarpeted stairs rendered altogether superfluous. A clothes-brush having been asked for, was, after half an hour's hunt, at length found. "Faith!" observed Biddy, with the most charming naïveté, "now, what's the use of taking off the dirt, for sure it will be coming on again soon enough!"

Trim pig fair is held on the outskirts of the town, at

the foot of the mound whereon the county of Meath has raised its "grateful contribution to the illustrious Duke of Wellington," commonly said to have been born at Dangan, in the neighbourhood. A statue of the hero in full regimentals surmounts a tall granite column, and from the height of his commanding position the great Duke, waving his Field Marshal's baton, looks down benignantly on the grunting, squeaking, swinish multitude congregated beneath, and over which Pat, Mike, Dan, Larry, and Tim, all rigged out in their best toggery as well as clean shaven—an operation that has most likely been performed by the aid of such reflection as a bucket of clean water supplies—are driving the hardest of bargains. "Will ye take it?" demands Mike; "will ye take it now? giv me yer hand," which having obtained possession of, he thumps away at with his own brawny fist, repeating question and thump at the same time. Meeting invariably with a negative response, Mike at length turns on his heel, exclaiming in a tone of intense disgust, "Och! may I niver breathe agin if I giv yer another ha'penny." But, unfortunately, he cannot resist turning round and casting a wistful glance at the coveted pig, which has the effect of bringing him back again. By this time the bystanders, all more or less excited over the business, begin to interfere. "Ye'll never git a ha'penny more, and I'll have to drive yer pig home agin." "Devil the pound wid him, and sell yer pig!" "Let him have the pig!" "Why don't yer sell him the pig?" "Take his money and give him the pig!"

Such is the advice given to Tim, who has a pig to dispose of; and, on the other hand, a certain amount of persuasion is brought to bear upon Mike, who is desirous of buying one:—"Arrah! devide the ten shillings wid him!" "Give him another half-crown!" "Give him his £4" &c. Finally, on Tim consenting to return Mike five shillings out of the £4 a bargain is struck, hands are clasped, the money is paid, and duly spat upon, certain hieroglyphics are scored on the pig's back in red chalk, and the transaction is brought to a satisfactory ending.

The proverbial humours of an Irish fair, such as we read of in works of fiction, have passed utterly away. You may be in the heart of one of these assemblages from early morning till well-nigh dusk, and not hear a laugh, nor see so much as a smile on the countenance of a single person present. Save, too, from the lips of itinerant ballad-singers, one rarely hears even a snatch of song. The Irish peasantry, eaten up with a thorough hatred of England and everything English, while guardedly polite to the "Saxon" stranger who is brought into contact with them, appear to have become the most melancholy of mortals. And yet, with all this, even in their driest dealings there is a touch of humour that is perfectly irresistible, although they themselves evidently unconscious of it, maintain the staidest gravity. This is especially apparent at an Irish pig fair, where the flower of the land in the finest possible condition are periodically gathered together. On these occasions,



MEATH LADS AT CROSSAKEEL.



A SMALL FARMER.



A MIDDLEMAN.

shortly after sunrise, along all the roads leading into the town, a procession of pigs is to be seen—the full grown and moderately strong animals being skilfully conducted by means of stout wisps of straw tied to one of their hind legs, while the more delicate porcine bantlings are brought in in donkey carts, packed almost as closely together as sardines in a box. The pig, which promenades steadily enough along the open highway, is apt to turn aside to the right hand and to the left directly he finds himself in the principal street of a town, and as a consequence a continual struggle is maintained between pig and driver at almost every open shop-door and gateway along the line of route.

MEATH LADS.

BEFORE leaving county Meath we were anxious to secure a characteristic group of its peasantry—those long suffering and discontented spirits who, from having been for some years past the terror of landlords and agents, had now become equal objects of dread to many tenant farmers. Selecting for this purpose the neighbourhood of the more recent outrages, we drove in the direction of Killallen, where most of the land being in grass, and the district moreover being very thinly populated, we proceeded a considerable distance without meeting a single labouring man. Just after leaving Crossakeel, a

little village among the hills, which had its post of police, although old men and women, formed the bulk of its inhabitants, we caught sight of a large party of men at work in a field by the roadside. Stopping the car suddenly, we cleared the bank, and made for the nearest group, with whom we engaged

in conversation, while the car-driver, leaving his horse, strolled up to a second group some little distance off. Having explained our object, and my friend having commenced plying his pencil, we noticed men running from all parts of the field to where the car-driver was standing, and where a lively discussion appeared to be going on. Eventually several of them shouldered their large spades and cleared off. The sketch completed, and the car-driver having rejoined us, we learned from him that we had created considerable alarm among the party. It seems that, having heard a good deal about the Coercion Bill, and that anyone might be arrested under it without the formality of a warrant, they had set us down as detectives from the Castle, and had anxiously inquired of the car-driver, who among them it was, that we intended taking into custody.

We gathered from the people, that the field they were working in was rented by a middleman at the rate of £2 per acre; and, divided into plots (each consisting of two ridges, equal to half a rood), was re-let to some twenty men at the rate of £7 per acre, provided the crop turned out a good one. In the event of the crop proving indifferent, the rent was to be lowered, at the discretion of the middleman. After the land had been worked for four years, it was commonly allowed to lie fallow for five years or longer; consequently



A RIBBONMAN'S CABIN AT CLONFAD.



A GENTLEMAN FARMER AT MULLINGAR MARKET, COUNTY WESTMEATH.



A TOWN MARKET.



they did not consider they were charged an exorbitant rent. They complained bitterly of nearly all the land in the county being devoted to pasture. A man could do no good there, they said; and everyone emigrated to America the moment he had the chance. Wages were just then 2s. a day, but a farm servant, engaged all the year round, only received 6s. a week: sometimes a cabin was thrown in, but this was rare. Beef they never tasted. "You put me in stock, there," replied one of them, when asked the price of butchers' meat; "I haven't tasted a bit these seven years. At Christmas we manage a morsel of bacon, and all the rest of the year we live on potatoes. We burn turf in winter, as it is cheaper than coal; it is 15d. to 16d. the gaze, and there are five gazes in the ton. Not half the men in this field can read—it is only the young ones who can; we all send our children to school now; we know it's the best thing we can do for them. We don't care about the Coercion Bill; they can't take our 'pea-shooters' away from us." "Why?" "Why, because they never trusted us with any! I hope the Land Bill will do us good; it's quite time something was done for us." So far the spokesman of the party, and the police-sergeant at Crossakeel, said the people in the neighbourhood were generally very badly off. Their hours were long, and they worked very hard, and in the winter time the distress among them was something painful.

The agricultural returns for Meath showed that there were four head of cattle and six sheep against three human beings.



TENANT FARMERS, COUNTY MEATH.

including all the population of the towns, to every fifteen acres of its entire area. You may drive across the county in certain directions, for a whole day, through extensive tracts of splendid pasture, and meet with only occasional small patches of land under tillage, sometimes by the plough, but more frequently by the spade. One lights on no dairy farms among these broad pastures, which are simply rich grazing-grounds for stock, the best of them being commonly held by the landholders themselves, and the remainder by the more substantial farmers, while only the inferior soils, reclaimed bog and the like, fall to the lot of the peasantry. As a consequence of this condition of things, the demand for agricultural labour is not only trifling, but uncertain and never continuous, while wages are correspondingly low.

A FEW OF RORY'S DOINGS IN WESTMEATH.

IN Westmeath, every road leading out of Mullingar, the county town, has its story of agrarian crime dating from the epoch prior to the passing of the Irish Land Bill. The station-master of the railway had been shot dead at his own door in front of the line, and only a couple of hundred yards from the station, as he was about entering his house at the close of his day's duties. The armed policemen who were on guard heard the shot fired, but, imagining the report to have been caused by the buffers of some carriages being driven violently together, left the station for the night, in perfect ignorance of the occurrence. A short time previously a landed proprietor named Fetherston had been fired at and mortally wounded while being driven

home late at night from the Killnecan station. The coachman, on hearing the report, put his horses into a gallop, and reached home, without stopping to look at his master, who, on the carriage-door being opened, was found lying at the bottom of the vehicle quite dead. Mr. Fetherston was universally regarded in the neighbourhood as a hard landlord and an overbearing man; and however horrified people may have been at the tragedy, no one seems to have felt the smallest surprise at it.

A few weeks prior to our visiting Mullingar, a small farmer named Kerrigan who had purchased the right of occupying five acres of land at Johnstown, a few miles east of Mullingar, and which he had afterwards refused to give back again, had been shot down in his own house and died of his wounds a couple of days afterwards. On the road from Mullingar to



ELECTION RIOT AT GRANARD, COUNTY LONGFORD.



A CONCILIATORY SPIRIT.



MAKING IT HOT FOR A RED COAT.

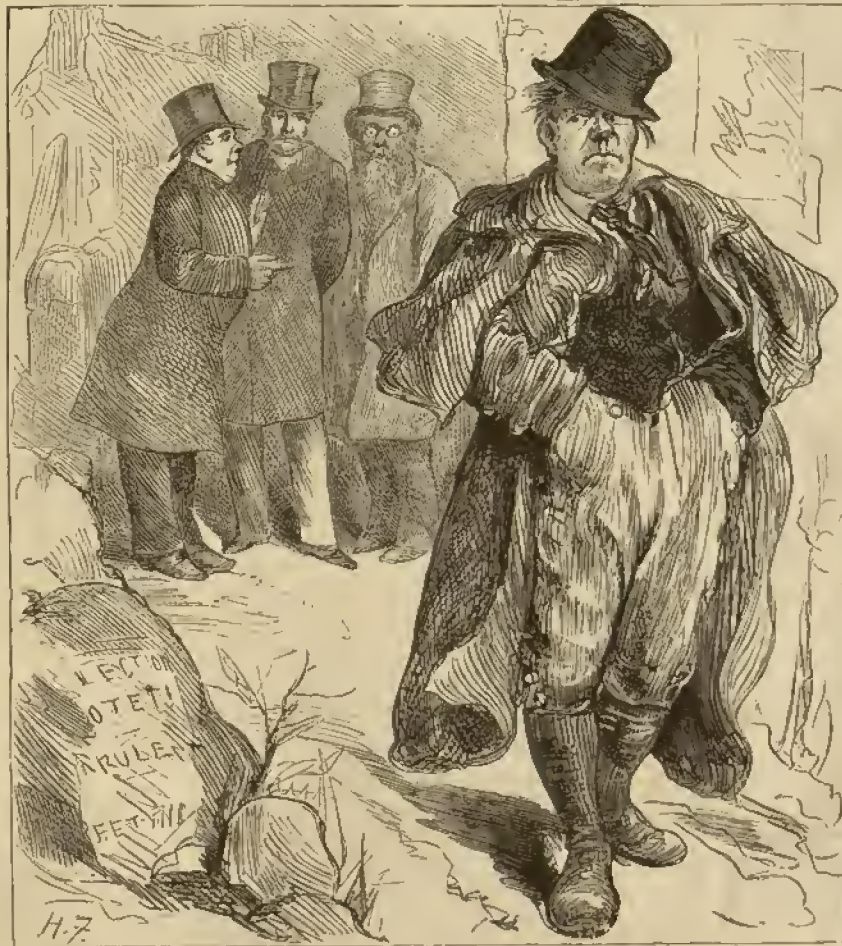


HOME RULERS.

Kilbeggan the car-driver pointed out the cottage of a carpenter who had been lured from home one evening on the pretence of some cart having broken down and requiring repair, and had been shot dead in a lonely spot by a band of Ribbonmen. In the same neighbourhood, the agent, the bailiff, and one of the tenants of Sir W. Leeson had been severely fired at, in connection with some dispute about the Clonahague farm, and the two latter had been severely wounded. The agent, Mr. Hornidge, was shot at on his way to church, and fortunately escaped injury. We noticed his house standing back some little distance from the road in the midst of a large tract of grass land, laid out with clumps of fir trees, and fenced with iron hurdles, giving the place the appearance of a miniature park. Two armed constables were strolling in front of the building, for since the attempt on Mr. Hornidge's life several years previously, he had been guarded by police night and day, a couple of constables accompanying him on all his movements as regularly as his own shadow.

At this epoch, wherever in Ireland a cattle fair happened to be held, and, indeed, wherever it chanced to be market day, extra police were invariably to be found on duty, picking their way among the potatoes and the pigs, or hovering on the outskirts of the crowd; consequently at Mullingar one saw without surprise the space in front of the market house thickly dotted over with constables the day on which the weekly market was held. Still, one was hardly prepared to see a private car drive into the midst of the throng, having on it a respectable-looking old gentleman with a large white beard, and a couple of policemen armed with loaded carbines. It was evident the individual in question was not in custody, as the driver halted at his bidding, and he himself alighted of his own accord. On enquiry we learned this was no other than Mr. Hornidge, attended by his inseparable armed escort. It was in this fashion that a highly respectable gentleman farmer was constrained to go about his ordinary business in county Westmeath.

A mile or two beyond Mr. Hornidge's residence,



A FREE AND INDEPENDENT VOTER.

we came to the village of Clonfad, consisting of a few isolated mud or stone cabins, in a more than ordinarily dilapidated condition, the thatched roofs being even more rotten and pervious to the elements than the roofs of Irish cabins generally are, and the small square hole that serves to light the entire dwelling being frequently without a scrap of glass in it. Twelve of these cabins, with their few acre plots of poor neglected land, were owned by the Rev. Mr. Crofton, who had been at Clonfad about a fortnight previously to receive his rents and make an inspection of his possessions, with the view, as he intimated to his tenants, of raising their rents. It was dark before he started on his return to Tyrell's Pass, some two miles distant; and he had hardly proceeded a couple of hundred yards beyond the last cabin on his small estate, along a perfectly straight road with open fields on either side, when he was met by three men, one of whom fired at and wounded him slightly in the shoulder. The ruffians instantly scampered off—only however to lie in wait some little distance along the road, when, watching their opportunity, they sent four flying shots after their victim, all of which luckily missed their aim. Everyone of the tenants had since received notice to quit. Most of them admitted that Mr. Crofton was a very kind man, who had given money to several of them on the very day he had been attacked. Still they protested that the land which they held was too poor to warrant the rise of between 30 and 40 per cent. that he had talked of, and which had induced the agent of the property to resign, forcing Mr. Crofton to take the management of it into his own hands. It was some miles further along the same road, on the borders of the county, that a land steward had been fired at through a hole in a high wall, while on his way to church at Clara.

One particular individual commonly spoken of by the country people with the prefix of Captain to his name, and regarded by the police as the recognised leader of the Westmeath Ribbonmen, appeared to be universally looked upon as



IN A HOLE.



A BOG VILLAGE NEAR CASTLEBEGG, COUNTY ROSCOMMON.

constables, with double that number of foot soldiers, and three squadrons of Hussars. At Granard, there was a still larger force to maintain order. The police held both ends of the main street during the whole day, and took away every man's shillelagh, stick, or bludgeon, which was at once broken up, chopped to pieces, or burnt. Several small fights, however, occurred round the polling-booth, and the Lanciers had to clear the street, but no great amount of mischief was done.

STRATEGICAL POSITION OF ATHLONE.

On leaving Mullingar for Athlone we noticed that, in accordance with orders given since the Peace Preservation Act had come into operation, police armed with loaded carbines, in addition to their sword-bayonets, made their appearance at the railway station just before the train from Dublin drew up along.

the instigator and part perpetrator of most of these outrages. He was a tenant of the Rev. Mr. Crofton's, and treated the notice that had been given him to quit with supreme contempt, holding no doubt the common opinion quoted by the poor law inspector of the county, that in Westmeath notices to quit were best replied to by a bullet.

ELECTION RIOTS AT GRANARD.

On leaving Westmeath we proceeded to the adjoining county of Longford, where an election, at which Captain King Harman came forward as the Nationalist candidate, was taking place. On this occasion, party spirit was indulged with the customary characteristic vehemence; but the magistrates had taken care to have a large force of police and military collected at all the polling-places, and regularly patrolling the streets. In the town of Longford there were a couple of hundred armed

side the platform, recalling to mind the well-known observation of the Duke of Wellington, that in Ireland the rule of force was continually to be seen. At both Mullingar and Athlone (less than thirty miles distant from one another and connected together by the railway) considerable bodies of troops were stationed. The latter place—from its central situation in the very heart of Ireland as it were, having railways diverging in four different directions, commanding, so to speak, the four quarters of the kingdom—forms a strategical point of the utmost importance; and one was therefore not surprised to find Athlone swarming with troops, including artillery, cavalry, infantry, flying columns, and military train. After visiting the scenes of recent outrages in the vicinity of Athlone, we crossed the Shannon into Roscommon, where the practice of large parties of armed men going about at night-time administering unlawful oaths had of late become somewhat prevalent.

A ROSCOMMON BOG VILLAGE.

NEARLY one-seventh of the entire area of Ireland consists of peat bog, which is spread largely over the limestone plains. This is especially the case in county Roscommon, where entire villages are to be met with in the midst of the tracts of bog-land, with the cabins constructed entirely of turf, and deep dykes for draining off the water intersecting the land in all directions. There are several of these villages in the neighbourhood of Castlebegg, and after we had driven in the direction of them for about a couple of miles, our car-driver suddenly pulled up and informed us that we had reached our destination. On our right hand extended an immense bog, the surface of which was broken up by scattered cabins, and intersected by broad deep dykes, some half dozen of which we had to leap in order to reach the nearest of these primitive



habitations, scarcely a shade superior to the cave of an ancient Briton.

At first not a soul was to be seen, but the unusual appearance of a Saxon stranger soon sufficed to attract a perfect crowd. Scouts sallied forth in all directions, and a ragged regiment of half-famished men, women, and children, including the halt, the lame, and the blind, came trooping in. The most intelligent among them was a sturdy ploughman, who had lived on the bog all his life, and had a cabin, and an acre plot on which he had sown oats and potatoes, hoping, though doubting whether the first would come to anything, and for which he paid the farmer for whom he worked 30s. a year. He talked sensibly enough about tenant-right and the Land Bill, and told us that since the passing of the Encumbered Estates

Act, wages had risen a trifle in Roscommon, being just then 1s. a day, with 1s. 3d. during shearing time.

"The farmers of Roscommon," said he, "are nearly all well off—are gentlemen, in fact—and require a poor man to put his hand to his hat whenever he meets them. Do you think, Sir," added he, "the Land Bill is going to do the poor man any good?" This was the first question which the more intelligent Irish agricultural labourer usually asked a stranger, into whose eyes he looked trustfully, believing him to be possessed of knowledge far beyond his own limited ken.

Flaherty, another resident in the bog, who was aged 50, and had a wife and seven children, four of whom he admitted went out begging, told us that a year ago he was behind hand a year's rent, amounting to 27s., and had had his standing crop seized,

and his land taken away from him, because he could not pay up. Several families belonging to the village sent their children to school a mile distant, and paid a penny a week for each. However great might be their distress, it seems that the people of the bog always avoided the poor-house, because as they said there was a chance of their righting themselves, but if they once gave up their cabins and their holdings, it was quite certain they would never get them back again.

POLICE NIGHT RAID AT THE HUNDRED ACRES BOG.

THE system of administering unlawful oaths which had been rife for some time past in Mayo, had only lately been introduced into the adjoining county of Roscommon at the epoch of our



INHABITANTS OF A BOG VILLAGE.

visit. Large parties of men, generally armed, visited the farmers' houses at night, and swore them not to pay higher rents than the poor-law, or Griffith's valuation, and to be "true to the country." It was believed that the farmers themselves encouraged these proceedings, which, like the majority of threatening notices, had for their object the prevention of any increase of rent. When a man was sworn he was usually required to "pass the matter on"—that is, engage himself to go out and spread the confederacy beyond his own immediate neighbourhood; hence it was that the system, after traversing the length and breadth of Mayo, had crossed the borders of this county into Roscommon.

The way in which the police came to make the discovery that the system of administering illegal oaths was becoming largely prevalent in Roscommon was this. The constabulary posted on the Mayo borders of the county had for some time past observed a marked difference in the manners of the country people, whom they described as being ordinarily friendly, simple-minded, and communicative, and, moreover, easily led by any one professing to be more learned than themselves. They noticed that they now looked askance at them and endeavoured to shun all kind of intercourse. Imagining that something was brewing, they were not surprised to learn that an armed party had entered the cabin of a man named Vesey, at a place called Pollinarity, at the extreme borders of the county Roscommon, at night time, and forced him to swear that he would surrender a certain plot of land then in his occupation to a widow named Homan. Purely through fear, he complied with the



WOMEN AT FIELD WORK IN THE HUNDRED ACRES BOG, COUNTY ROSCOMMON.

obligations of his oath, and the woman entered into possession. This put the police on the *qui vive*; and when a party of three were on their way from Ballinlough station to arrest the woman Homan on a warrant for holding illegal possession of Vesey's land, and just as they had arrived at a place called the Hundred Acres, they saw in the dim morning twilight a party of about twenty men standing near a cabin in the midst of the bog by the wayside. They wheeled round by a narrow path with the view of coming up with them, but seeing this movement on the part of the police, the men scampered off across the bog in all directions; and by the time the constables reached the cabin they managed to secure but one of the party. They learned from the occupants of the cabin, one Michael Braunan and his wife, that the door had been burst in by a number of men while they were in bed, who had sworn Braunan in the dark, in order that he might not be able to recognize any of the party, "to be loyal to the country, and to pay no rent beyond the poor-law valuation of his holding."

The captured man having "peached" on his accomplices, a couple of nights afterwards a considerable body of police was drawn in to headquarters at Castle-reagh from all the surrounding posts, and started off on cars from the police barracks at midnight, a stipendiary magistrate of the district being in their company, with the object of scouring the country round about the Hundred Acres, and arresting certain men who had been indicated to them as belonging to the gang that had sworn Brennan.

The inhabitants of Castle-reagh had all retired to rest when the cortege of armed men crossed the market



POLICE STARTING AT MIDNIGHT FROM THEIR BARRACKS AT CASTLEREAGH TO MAKE ARRESTS



SLIGO HOUSE, WESTPORT, COUNTY MAYO.

place and passed down the principal street, then over the bridge across the river Suck, and through some outlying hamlet into the open country, where the white cabins stand out clearly in the moonlight against the dun background hills. After a time the road winds through a dense fir plantation past a gentleman's seat perched on rising ground, in the midst of a solitude of foliage and verdure, and finally strikes the village of Ballin-

lough, on the borders of a charming little lake, which gives its name to the place.

A singularly wild-looking country is next traversed, the road ascending and descending a succession of precipitous hills, with isolated cabins nestling in the hollows, and stone hedges on either side, and scarcely a tree to be seen for miles. The ruins of a once extensive mansion rise up against the sky at the end

of a long avenue of beech trees—the seat, no doubt, in years gone by, of one of those rollicking Irish squires who dissipated their inheritances soon after succeeding to them, and left the legacy of winding up their affairs to the Encumbered Estates Court. A drive of another mile or two, and the road turns sharply to the right, and intersects an immense bog, on the far outskirts of which, hemmed in by the stony Galway hills, is the



THE AGENT OF THE MARQUIS OF SLIGO ON HIS WAY TO BUSINESS AT WESTPORT.

locality which goes by the name of the Hundred Acres. Here the cars halted, and the police, armed with loaded rifles, revolvers, and sword bayonets, were told off into parties, and crossed the bog in different directions. One cabin door after another was burst in by them in the hope of capturing the individuals they were in quest of, but in almost every instance they found the birds flown, and succeeded in arresting only three men, who were committed to take their trial at the ensuing Roscommon Assizes.

So terror-stricken were the accomplices of these men that no less than 110 of them fled the neighbourhood; and although detectives were sent after them in all directions, not one of them was secured. When we drove over to the Hundred Acres a few weeks afterwards, we found all the agricultural labour of the district being performed by women and children. Children were driving the pigs and tending the cattle, and women were ploughing, digging, and manuring the fields. We entered into conversation, so far as was practicable, with a

handsome-looking, well-made, muscular woman clad in the universal scarlet petticoat of the district, who spoke the choicest Connacht lingo, and whose bare brawny legs, protected at the ankles with "tracheens," a kind of rude moccasin, were only a shade or two lighter than the garment that half concealed them. From her we learned that all the men for miles around had gone away through the police, upon whom she vented her choicest indignation. "It would be a good thing," said she, "if they were all packed off out of the country



DESERTED WHARVES AND WAREHOUSES AT WESTPORT.



THE DISTRESS IN THE WEST OF IRELAND.—DISTRIBUTION OF RELIEF TICKETS IN THE TURF MARKET AT WESTPORT.



CROAGH PATRICK FROM CLEW BAY, COUNTY MAYO.

—a parcel of lazy, loitering fellows going about interfering with quiet people, who did no harm to anyone." They had broken in her cabin door in the night-time and had smashed all her crockery, although she told them her husband was not at home, but had gone to see his "ould granmither." As for the swearing of people, as the police said, she knew nothing about that; the men they met were coming home from a wake up among the hills, and they only called on Mike Brannan, who was ill, just to enquire how he was. Three o'clock in the morning she admitted to be rather an early hour to make inquiries after a sick man's health; still that was nothing to her. She did not know anything about the Land Bill or the Coercion Bill.

Her husband never spoke to her of such things; what she wanted was to have him home again, that he might manure and plant their plot himself, and let her attend to her baby. All the while this conversation was going on the woman was tossing manure into a cart with a three pronged fork with an energy that would have done credit to a navy.

WESTPORT AND THE MARQUIS OF SLIGO'S ESTATE.

THERE are people still living in Westport who tell you that they remember the period when its enormous warehouses, which excite the amazement of strangers, were stored with grain, and

when a dozen ships of heavy tonnage were to be seen at one time alongside its quays, taking in cargoes of oats, and they generally unite in attributing the decay of the export trade of the place to the repeal of the corn laws. But Mr. Thackeray, who visited Westport so far back as 1842, reported that at this epoch alongside the handsome pier one solitary cutter was lying, near to which were three boats, and that these, with six sailors lolling on the pier, were all the symptoms of maritime prosperity the port in those days presented. "As for the warehouses," remarked he, "they are enormous, and might accommodate, I should think, not only the trade of Westport, but of Manchester too. There are huge streets of these houses, ten



THE IRISH RELIEF SQUADRON—DISTRIBUTING STORES FROM H.M.S. "VALOROUS" AT RILKERRAN.

stories high, with cranes, owners' names, &c., marked, wine-stores, flour-stores, bonded tobacco warehouses, and so forth. The six sailors that are singing on the pier are no doubt admirals of as many fleets of a hundred sail that bring wines and tobacco from all quarters of the world to fill these warehouses. These dismal mausoleums, as vast as pyramids, are the places where the dead trade of Westport lies buried—a trade that in its lifetime probably was about as big as a mouse. Nor is this the first nor the hundredth place to be seen in this country which sanguine builders have erected to accommodate an imaginary commerce."

The picture of nearly thirty years preceding was true in the main ten years ago and is equally true to-day, the only difference being that Time has here and there laid his

hand on all these bricks and mortar and solid masonry, and started many of their joints. We observed some great rents in the walls of more than one of these warehouses which had not arisen from their floorings giving way under the heavy burdens they had had to support; we noticed, too, that the stone facing of the quay was crumbling to pieces, that grass had sprung up between the interstices of the masonry, and that the only sign of life on the quay itself was four ducks, which were waddling leisurely along; these being by the way in addition to the habitual half-dozen boatmen, who were lolling on the neighbouring little bridge. One saw that all the ironwork of the disused dredging-machine was eaten away with rust, that the bottoms were fairly out of the mud barges, that both rigging and hull of more than one cutter, after exposure during the winter, were rotting

by slow degrees in the sun. We believe, too, that Mr. Thackeray is right in his surmise, and that the great bulk of these warehouses, which not merely face the port, but line both sides of an adjacent street, have been erected to accommodate an imaginary commerce, for it did not appear that the padlocks on the majority of the doors had ever been unlocked since the day the keys were first turned in them.

At the time we visited Westport in 1870, Lord John Browne, brother of the Marquis of Sligo, was the solitary occupant of the handsome Italian mansion in the midst of that charming park into which one passes out of the very streets of Westport, as it were, and where wood and water and gently undulating slopes of verdure combine to produce one of those things of beauty which are joys for ever to all save him to whom they



WOMEN CARRYING HOME MEAL RECEIVED FROM THE RELIEF COMMITTEE.

chance to belong. Lord John Browne dwelt in the domain of the Marquisate and exercised sway over one knows not how many square miles of territory in the neighbourhood of Westport alone, and carried on the work of evicting the poorer class of peasantry from the Marquis's estate. At one time, we believe, all the land between Newport and the borders of the county of Galway, upwards of thirty English miles, was the Marquis's fee simple. At Westport was his "lordly dwelling place," with a flourishing little town immediately outside his park gates on the one side, and an extensive seaport on the other. The instant you pass the boundary of the Marquis's domain, huge piles of warehouses, taller than the family ancestral trees, tower overhead in endless file, and the long perspective line of broad stone quays touches the very park railings. At the other end of this magnificent estate, secluded among the melancholy-looking range of mountains which locks in the Killery, the Marquis had his salmon-fishing lodge, called Delphi, sheltered by a dense plantation of trees. For some reason or other, that want of peace which vexes others than public men came over the Marquis; and at the

time of the famine, with the view of escaping the heavy burdens imposed by the poor law, he granted a long lease of fourteen Irish square miles of his Mayo estates to Captain Houston, at the rate, it was commonly said, of fourpence-half-penny per acre; and on this immense tract of land—the major part mountain land, we admit—not so much as a single bushel of oats was grown, the entire district having been converted into one vast grazing-ground, stocked with Scotch cattle and Scotch sheep, tended by what the native peasantry, who look with no kindly eye on the interlopers, term, "Scotchmen."

Captain Houston had not a single tenant-farmer on his fourteen Irish square miles of land. All who chanced to be on the estate when it came into his hands had been duly cleared off it. We did not hear that this gentleman had ever been threatened; nevertheless he was living in his mountain solitude on the shores of Lough Doo, with a post of Royal Irish constabulary established in the Marquis of Sligo's old fishing-lodge hard by. Shots, it is true, were fired at night time through the window of the cabin of one of his Scotch herdsmen, but simply, it was understood, as a warning to him to leave the country,

which he was not slow to do; and in the preceding autumn, Mr. James Hunter, a former stock manager of Captain Houston's, who for some years past had farmed on his own account upwards of 4,000 acres of mountain and arable land at Tyrenar, on the shores of Clew Bay, half a dozen miles north-west of Newport, was shot dead on his car within about a quarter of a mile of his home, by a sure aim—for it was half-past ten o'clock at night, and he was accompanied by his wife, child, and serving lad, none of whom were hurt. For this assassination, which arose through Mr. Hunter having taken proceedings against some trespassers, who after being formally warned off his bog-land, had continued cutting turf as they had long been in the habit of doing, nine men were arrested, but they were all eventually discharged, for want of evidence.

The present agent of the Marquis of Sligo, Mr. Smith, is said to have been shot at no less than five times, the last occasion being about a year ago. The Marquis himself is a strict abstemious, so that he is not likely to be intimidated by the shooting of his agent. The latter had been warned not to go about without an armed escort, and had merely his son with him when he was

attacked at Claggan mountain, in the neighbourhood of Westport, by four men with blackened faces, who fired at him, but missed their aim. Mr. Smith's son on returning the ruffians' fire proved himself a better shot, for he lodged a bullet in one of them, which naturally had a salutary effect on the rest of the gang. At present Mr. Smith avails himself of police protection, and is regularly to be seen going to his office in Westport accompanied by his son, and escorted by a couple of the Royal Irish constabulary.

CLEW BAY AND CROAGH PATRICK.

ALTHOUGH one cannot say much for either the port or the town of Westport (for the latter—save that pleasant portion of it which faces the noisy little stream that divides, as it were, the town in two, is little else than a collection of small slate-roofed houses and thatched mud-cabins), everything may be said for their situation and for the magnificent scenery in their immediate neighbourhood. There is Clew Bay, for instance, in the south-eastern angle of which Westport is situated, twenty miles in length by eight or ten miles wide, and so thickly studded with islands that they may be counted by hundreds; islands, too, of the most variable character, some beautifully wooded, others more jagged rocks; others, again, though uninhabited, carefully cultivated, ploughs being conveyed thither in boats for this purpose. The lion, however, of Westport is the conical-shaped mountain, called Croagh Patrick, dominating the town on the south-west, and formerly an object of superstitious reverence on the part of the peasantry, as the spot where St. Patrick cursed the snakes and other venomous reptiles and drove them out of Ireland. The sides and summit of Croagh Patrick are still climbed by religious devotees on what is called "pattern day," in the autumn season of the year.

RELIEF OF THE DISTRESS IN THE WEST OF IRELAND.

IN the winter of 1879 the deplorable condition of large numbers of the small tenant farmers and cottiers in the Western parts of Ireland became a matter of grave public anxiety. From Connemara and the shores of the bay of Galway, round those of Mayo, Sligo and Donegal, and throughout the poorer agricultural districts in the bleak and barren situations not far

from the Atlantic, the distress was something terrible. The soil of Western Connaught being too poor to support even its present scanty population in bad seasons, the distress there is chronic, and as Lord Dufferin says, there extends "a broad riband of hopeless misery which no change in the present relations of landlord and tenant is likely to alleviate." The very climate is of itself detestable, and unfortunately there is neither the capital nor the energy at hand to counteract its influences. Absenteeism has done its worst in these parts, and things are now in so hopeless a condition that the heart of the most energetic resident proprietor may well fail him.

To alleviate this distress, a relief fund was instituted in Dublin, in the early part of last year, under the auspices of the Duchess of Marlborough, wife of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and about the same time an auxiliary fund was opened by the Lord Mayor of London. A second fund was raised in Dublin by a committee, which met at the Mansion House, and both Mr. Parnell and the proprietor of the *New*

Hunter lost his life, as already mentioned, by the bullet of an assassin. Tyrenar is moreover in the direction of Claggan mountain, the scene of the latest attempt on the life of Mr. Smith, the Marquis of Sligo's agent. We drove out of Westport on the north through a melancholy-looking, depopulated district, into a cheerful cultivated country, extending to the little town of Newport, pleasantly situated on the banks of the river that connects Lough Betsa with the sea. Soon after leaving Newport, we found ourselves fairly among the hills, with the range of mountains that hem in Clew Bay, rising upon our right hand. Inland, beyond the brown furrows and the emerald fields, we caught sight of a ruined abbey, and an ancient stone tower—the so-called castle of Grace O'Malley, whilom Queen of Connaught—with a streak of turquoise-tinted sea stretching beyond. Hereabouts, the country grew wilder looking, with merely a few cultivated plots among large tracts of sedge and gorse, and not so much as a single tree visible in any direction. A Scotch farmstead was now passed, the large fields being well fenced, with sound gates communi-



IRON POLICE HUT AT TYRENAR.

York Herald set subscriptions on foot in the United States of America. In a couple of months' time, about a quarter of a million sterling was raised, and arrangements were made for its judicious distribution in the shape of food, fuel, clothing, and seed potatoes, chiefly by the aid of local committees. Indian corn meal was the staple article of food distributed, and government gun boats, freighted with this commodity, were employed in cruising among the islands off the western coast, to relieve the famishing people.

The relief from America came in the form of provisions and clothing, and included barrels of potatoes and meal and cases of tinned meats dispatched to Ireland in the United States war frigate *Constellation*. The cargo was transhipped to seven British gun boats and was conveyed by them to ports on the southern and western coasts, or disseminated among the neighbouring small islands, the Duke of Edinburgh charging himself with superintending the distribution.

THE SCENE OF MR. HUNTER'S MURDER.—THE POLICE HUT AT TYRENAR.

WHILE at Westport we paid a visit to Newfield, or as it is more commonly called Tyrenar, a somewhat desolate-looking place where Mr. Hunter's farm was situated, and where Mr.



INTERIOR OF POLICE HUT.



THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

eating between them. Perched on the top of a neighbouring hill, a little white chapel was seen, and after crossing a tract of bog land the car turned off where the road dipped down to the shores of Clew Bay, in the direction of the farm formerly occupied by Mr. Hunter. The little homestead in which the latter had taken up his abode adjoins the ruins of some once considerable farm-house, and commands a view of the bay, and its multitudinous islands, towered over by Croagh Patrick. Mr. Hunter was shot just where the road turns off at Newfield, and it is supposed that the assassin lay crouched in a corner of the bog—the original cause of the ill-feeling of which his victim was the object—which being dug out five feet below the level of the road, afforded a convenient hiding place where he might await his opportunity. For some time after the murder was committed, a police-sergeant and several constables were stationed in the house of the widow, but eventually Mrs. Hunter decided to dispense with this guard, and a portable iron hut was set up for their accommodation, close to the spot where the murder was committed, and almost at the very door of the cabin of the man believed to be guilty of the crime.

These iron huts are common to the disturbed districts of Ireland, being used for the temporary lodgment of any extra force of armed constabulary which may be sent into localities where some notorious act of violence has been committed. The expense of maintaining this force falls upon the inhabitants, and forms a heavy burthen when the tax is levied over a thinly populated

or limited area, as in the case of Tyrenar, where the tax amounted to 25s. in the pound on the rental. The Tyrenar hut stands on the shores of the bay within a kind of compound, bounded by stone walls, over which at the time of our visit three or four lively young geese were roaming. The hut which has now been standing eleven years on the same spot, is formed of stout planking lined with iron plates half an inch thick, and is provided with portholes on all its sides to enable a fire to be directed by its occupants against an attacking party arriving from any point. Ordinarily these portholes are kept closed by sliding iron shields. The dimensions of the hut are 12 feet by 9, and seven men are lodged in this small apartment, which derives its light and ventilation from a swing fanlight over the door. It is furnished with a table, a couple of forms, several military chests, and a small cooking-stove, together with hammocks, slung one above another, in which the men sleep.

Towards the end of last year great opposition was threatened in county Tipperary to the erection of one of these huts at Pallas on land recently in the occupation of an evicted tenant-farmer and where the bailiff put in possession of the premises had been shot. A formidable display of military force, however, sufficed to cool the ardour of the pugnacious Palladians, and the hut was duly erected without any collision taking place between them and either the civil or military power. More recently at Islandeady, in the neighbourhood of Westport, the

police engaged in erecting an iron hut were refused lodgings and entertainment in the locality, and had to drive to Westport, a distance of six miles, every evening to procure beds. After a day or two the local car-owners refused to convey them, and they had to trudge daily from Westport to Islandeady and back again until the work was completed.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

THE Royal Irish Constabulary was established by Act of Parliament in 1814, and since the year 1846 the force has been maintained wholly at the expense of the central government, excepting in those cases where additional police protection has been applied for by the magistrates of any county or district, or has been assigned to disturbed localities by order of the Lord Lieutenant. The ordinary strength of the force somewhat exceeds 11,000 men, exclusive of the Dublin metropolitan police. Objections have from time to time been made to its semi-military character, still the men, though trained to the use of arms, and furnished with them to be used in case of need, are not accustomed to bear them in ordinary police service, or to display them for the purpose of intimidation.

The Irish constabulary are altogether a superior body of men, both morally and physically, although, perhaps, a little too strictly drilled and fettered by military routine. Of powerful physique, they undergo at times an amount of fatigue that



AFFIXING A NOTICE OF EVICTION UNDER PROTECTION OF THE POLICE.

would completely knock up the regular soldier, being often up two nights consecutively at a stretch, and not unfrequently going on foot over from twenty to thirty miles of ground between sunset and sunrise. We found most of those whom we got into conversation with, and more especially the sergeants, exceedingly intelligent. The pay of the men is moderately good, but their chances of promotion are slight, and appear to be productive of much suppressed dissatisfaction. An erroneous idea prevails in England that the Irish police are deficient in skill in discovering the perpetrators of agrarian crimes, and it has often been suggested to send London detectives to assist them. Nothing, however, could be more absurd. In thinly-populated country districts, where all information is steadily withheld by the peasantry, either through sympathy or fear, or down-right false information is given by them, of what use could a London detective be, and how is it possible under such a condition of things to bring offenders to justice unless they happen to be caught in the net? We well remember a sergeant of police remarking to us at Killallen that they had not so much as a

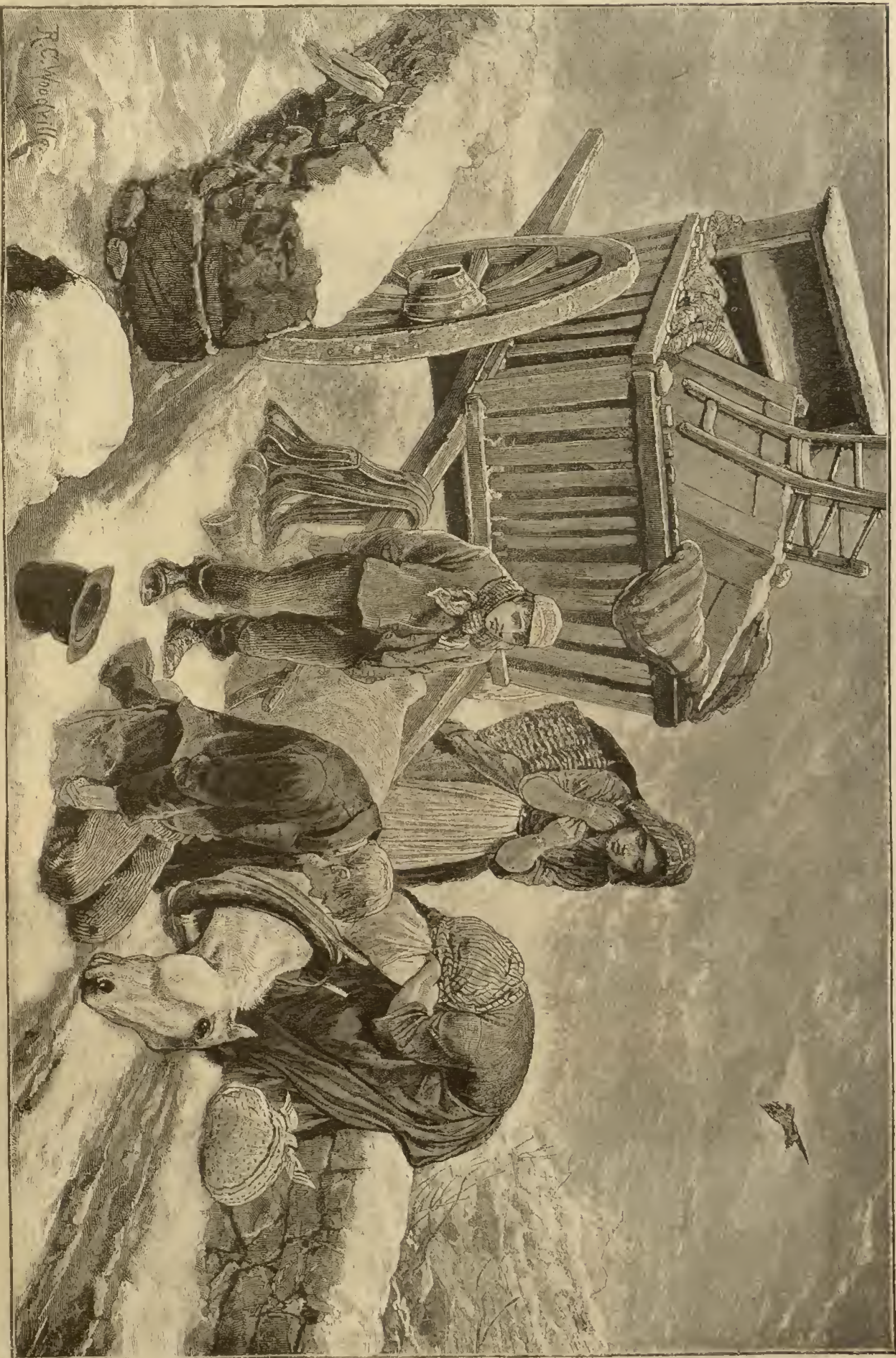
single friend among the small farmers and peasantry throughout the entire district.

The *Dublin Freeman's Journal*, recently published an article the gist of which was, that as the Royal Irish Constabulary are almost all the sons of small farmers, they are not to be depended upon in the present crisis to aid the Government in any action against their own class. To the son of a western farmer, serving in the west, where any day he may be sent into his own neighbourhood to suppress disturbances in which his father or his brothers are taking part, or to protect process-servers who possibly may be serving processes upon them, the situation is full of difficulty and pain. Such a man may possibly be so far influenced by sympathy for friends and acquaintances as to allow incidents to pass of which he ought to take notice. The difficulty, however, of a constable serving in his own or an adjoining county ought to be got over, and the men be saved from the unpleasantness of being placed in antagonism to their own belongings, by appointing them to serve in other provinces than their own.

There are upwards of 8000 Roman Catholics in the force, but it would be an insult to them to assume that they, or any large proportion of them, would be untrue to their oath and their training. Fifty years ago, when Roman Catholics yet smarted from a sense of their religious disabilities, and when, if ever, the Roman Catholic constable might have been expected to waver, he did his duty loyally and well during the tithe war, when he was called upon to protect the tithe-proctors in the execution of duties that must have been sorely opposed to his own opinions. Yet we find that at Carrickshock fourteen men, the majority of whom were Roman Catholics, laid down their lives in an attempt to save the proctor committed to their charge. Why should we doubt that similar loyalty may be looked for now?

CASTLEBAR, COUNTY MAYO.

ELEVEN miles distant from Westport by rail, is the town of Castlebar, in the centre of which is a large green, planted with stately trees, that give a novel and remarkably pleasant aspect to the place. Around this green are grouped the courthouse, the



PYOTEN, A SCENE IN GALWAY.

infirmary, the cavalry barracks, the principal hotel, and the disused, ancient goal, in front of which the notorious duellist commonly known as "fighting Fitzgerald" was hung some ninety-five years ago. He lived at Turlough in the immediate neighbourhood, and a direct descendant still owns and resides on the estate. At one of the corners of Castlebar-green the walls and tower of the Protestant church rise up among the trees, with a marble statue to a certain military O'Malley,

surrounded by small pyramids of cannon-balls over-looking the churchyard wall. During the Irish rebellion a battle was fought at Castlebar—between a small French force that had recently landed in the neighbouring bay of Killala and some English troops—which still goes by the derogatory appellation of "the Castlebar Races." Within the walls of the church is a tablet in memory of half a dozen of the French Fenians who fell on the occasion; and outside the town, in the corner of a field adjoining

the poorhouse, you are shown what is known as the Frenchman's grave—a small mound of earth covered with bright green turf, which the plough has religiously respected for more than three quarters of a century. The principal street of Castlebar has a business air about it, and some few of the shops would do no discredit to a thriving English country town; but immediately one crosses the little bridge over some nameless stream and ascends the hill a sad

picture of desolation presents itself. Here one encounters a long line of cottages in utter ruin, skirting the roadside, on the model farm of the Earl of Lucan, the principal landed proprietor in the neighbourhood, who was in enjoyment of the local reputation of rigidly clearing his extensive estates of the peasantry, and of being chairman of the worst-managed railway in the world.



HARROWING UNDER DIFFICULTIES IN COUNTY MAYO.

FARMING UNDER DIFFICULTIES IN MAYO.

WHEN at Castlebar we found everyone extremely anxious to give us information respecting the evictions on the property of Miss Gardiner, at Ballybeg, northward in the neighbourhood of Killala Bay; but, following the course we had invariably adopted, we thought it preferable to drive some five-and-thirty English miles and gather our information on the spot. We went by public car as far as Ballina, crossing on our route the granite ridge which develops itself between Ballina and Sligo, into what are known as the Ox mountains, and having the great Nephin mountain keeping us company on our left hand throughout the journey. Near the ridge known as "The Rocks," we came upon a couple of peasants—a man and his wife—engaged in harrowing their patch of rock-strewn mountain land under difficulties which would have astounded a ploughman in our Midlands. Scattered over the poor land lying in the hollows between the masses of rock were wretched little cabins, built of turf and stones, inhabited by hard-living families, who



grow potatoes and oats in small patches of ground, wherever the boulders will let them sow seed. There is seldom pasture for a cow, but they usually contrive to keep a pig. The harrow for the oat-field, was an implement of the rudest make, and had to be guided, or lifted over the rocks, by the hand of the wife who held it with a rope of straw. The horse, most likely borrowed or hired for the day, was led by the husband, and thus they made shift to do the work. It was a fine example of agriculture in the civilised nineteenth century, and in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

About half-way to Ballina we struck Lough Conn, with a little island some short distance from the shore, where "potteen" whisky was illicitly distilled almost under the very noses of the police, installed in neighbouring barracks in the midst of a mountain wilderness, at a place called Pontoon Bridge, which, save the aforesaid barracks, has in it only a single house erected for an hotel, but occupied at the epoch of



MAYO PEASANTRY.

our visit as a shooting and fishing lodge by a well-known London publisher. We crossed Lough Conn at its narrowest point, then skirted the lower lake known as Lough Cullen, and, eventually quitting the land of the mountain for the land of bog, in due course reached Ballina, a town of some pretension so far as population and hotels are concerned, as it numbers something like 5500 inhabitants, being half as many again as Castlebar, and supports three or four capital hotels, which is what very few second-rate Irish towns can manage to do.

From Ballina to Ballybeg was a dreary drive through a somewhat mountainous country, every acre of which has been reclaimed by the hard industry of the small tenant farmers and peasantry, patch by patch, and year after year. A whole mountain side in the neighbourhood of Ballycastle, near to where Miss Gardiner's property is situated, had been converted from a wet moss into wholesome pasture and arable land, by the hard labour of the tenant farmers who lived at its base; and it was the same in other parts of Mayo. Wherever the peasant's farm edged on the bog or mountain, he was certain to reclaim it, bit by bit, rood by rood; until at last the marketable value of the estate became so enhanced by his labour, that in many instances the land, which at one time was not worth sixpence an acre, became worth twenty shillings—rivaling the famous instance cited by Mr. Senior, of the barony of Fermanagh, the tenants of which, without the owner being at the expense of laying a tile, raising a fence, or driving a nail into a gate, increased its value from £3000 to £50,000 a year!

"MAN GARDINER" AND HER TENANTRY.

To reach Ballybeg it was requisite to drive through Miss Gardiner's grounds, through a gate that no longer swung on its hinges, and past a lodge the picture of filibertian decay—although the owner, if not of Scotch birth, is at any rate of Scotch extraction. In the neighbourhood of her residence,

Farmhill, and indeed as far as Ballina, she is known by the sobriquet of "Man Gardiner," from her habit of commonly going about, not over her own domain merely, but through the streets of Ballina in semi-male attire, and even we were told, with the stock of a revolver peeping out of her jacket pocket. At the point the road swept round to the house a little shepherd's cottage was passed, where four police constables were installed although Miss Gardiner had been absent from Farmhill for several months. A broken window in a small outbuilding immediately adjoining the house was pointed out as being the one through which a charge of shot was fired on the preceding Christmas Eve, when some eight grains wounded Miss Gardiner in the head. This attempt at assassination followed close upon the service of the notices of ejectment on Miss Gardiner's Ballybeg tenantry, and was an unquestionable result of it. Still, none of the latter were arrested, neither did the suspicion of the police point in that direction; though it is impossible not to surmise that some of them, at any rate had a



guilty complicity in the attempt against Miss Gardiner's life. And this is the dreadful feature in these affairs, that families who for generations have lived respectable members of society and preserved a thoroughly unsullied name, should, with good reason, be suspected of a guilty knowledge of the violent means about to be taken to avenge, if not to redress, their wrongs.

At the extremity of the grounds of Farmhill is Ballybeg, a small hamlet of cottages, each with its adjacent outbuildings. The first habitation we reached was that of Michael Moreghan, who, with his aged wife and one of his sons, with the wife of the latter and their four young children, still occupied it, the family, although they had been formally evicted for more than a month, being allowed to remain a limited time as "caretakers." The old man himself was on a bed of sickness, from which the chances were that he would never rise again. The son—a big-boned, muscular, outspoken Irishman—had made arrangements to emigrate, with his wife and children, to the United States in less than a month. His brother Arthur, who



SCENE OF THE MURDER OF LORD MOUNTMORES, NEAR CLONBUR, COUNTY MAYO.

1. Ebor Hall, the residence of Lord Mountmore.
2. The Spot where the Murder was committed.
3. Flanagan's Cabin.

was also married, and whose cottage was situated some fifty yards off, had done the same; and such was the case with the remainder of the younger tenants. But it was different with the old people—the two old men of seventy and their wives, and the still more aged mother of the Howards. They were unprepared to cross the Atlantic simply to lay their bones on American soil, and yet for miles throughout the district, where they had lived all their lives, not a cabin was to be procured. There, as elsewhere in Ireland, directly a tenant vacates his cot it is levelled to the ground. The world, indeed, was "all before them where to choose their place of rest;" and out into the world these old people were forced to go.

The peculiar hardship of the foregoing case was this. 1st. That all the tenants had lived for generations on their holdings, the land, in the first instance, having been reclaimed by their ancestors; 2nd. That a considerable proportion of them were upwards of seventy years of age; 3rd. That they had erected not merely their own cottages and out-buildings, but had gone to large expense in draining the land; 4th. That their rents were from 70 to 75 per cent. above the poor-law valuation of their holdings, and that none of them owed their landlord a sixpence.

Miss Gardiner is just as unpopular to-day in Mayo as she was ten years ago. She remains shut up in Farnhill house, with a female companion, an old steward, and a couple of constables. All food supplies had been cut off from her excepting such as she derived through the agency of the police, until an armed Orange expedition arrived unexpectedly from the north and effected her release.

DEPOPULATED MAYO.

TEN days spent in Mayo, journeying in all directions and mixing with all conditions of people, sufficed to convince us that the abnormal condition this county had presented up till within



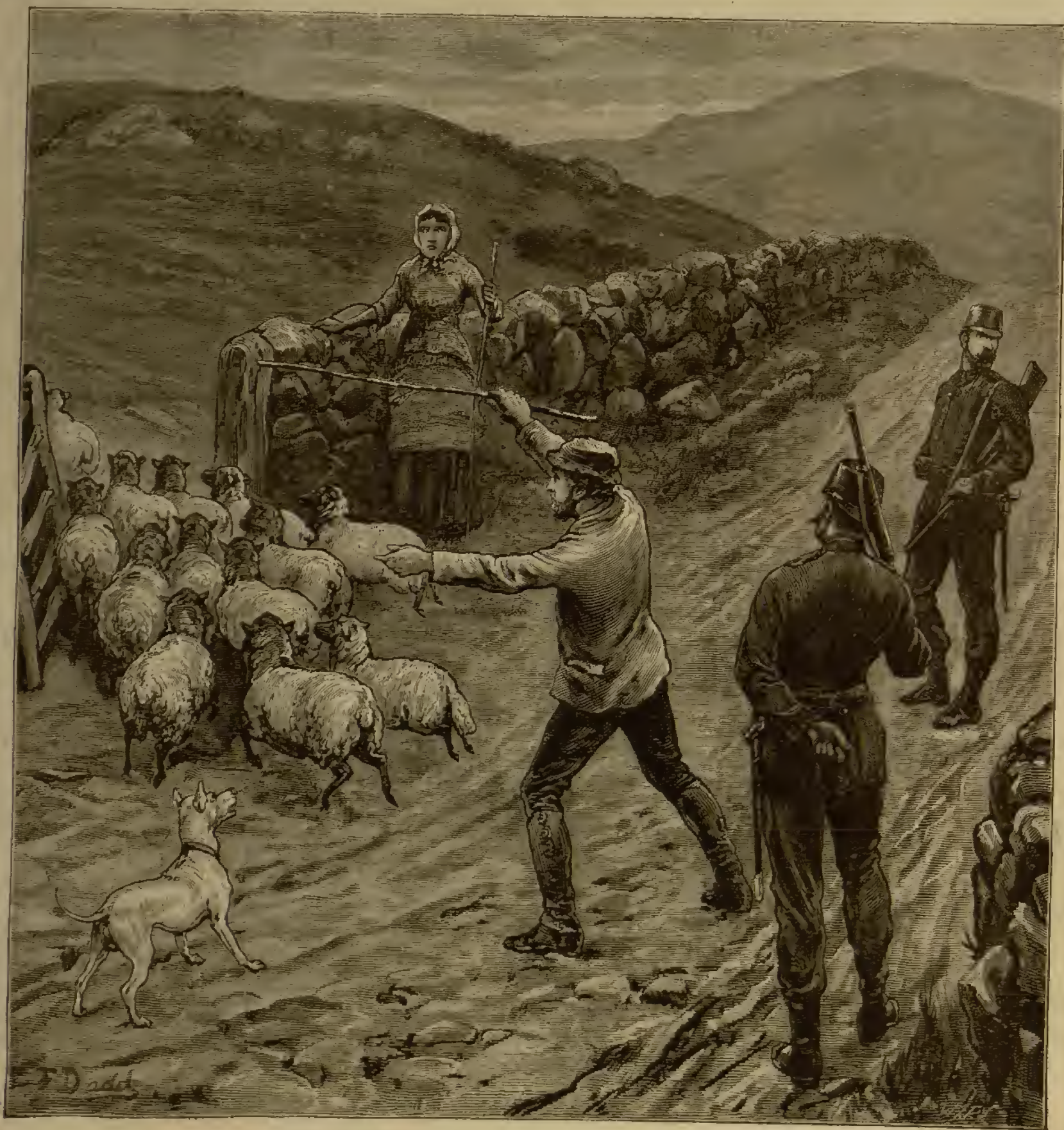
LOUGH MASK CASTLE, COUNTY MAYO.

a few weeks of our visit, was entirely attributable to the attempts which had been made to revive that system of wholesale eviction from which the tenant-farmers and peasantry of Mayo suffered so severely in years past. All through the centre of Ireland, in every town, every village, and by every roadside, ruined cabins were continually being met with; but in Mayo, whole districts that had been depopulated within a comparatively recent period were encountered. One drove through entire villages of ruined cabins with hardly so much as a habitable dwelling remaining, and in the neighbourhood of Westport, hillside after hillside being

pointed out on the estate of the Marquis of Sligo, where not so much as a single head of cattle or a single sheep was to be seen, but where ten years before cottages might be counted by the hundred. And even among the mountains one ever and anon came across the ruined walls of some solitary substantial farm-house overhung by spreading trees just bursting into leaf, with the surrounding land showing traces of recent cultivation, where the tenant had been capriciously evicted, possibly for no other reason than because his married son had been allowed to bring his wife home to live under the common roof. All this was patiently submitted to, but it is different to-day, when the mere serving of a notice of eviction has to be accomplished under the protection of a powerful force of constabulary, and occasionally of military even.

SCENE OF THE MURDER OF LORD MOUNTMORRES.

ON the borders of counties Mayo and Galway and in close proximity to that part of Connemara known as Joyce's country, is a narrow strip of rocky moorland separating two considerable lakes, Lough Corrib and Lough Mask, and forming a sort of natural bridge to reach the westerly peninsula of Connemara. Here the obscure little hamlet of Clonbur is situated, and here lay the unprofitable lands owned by Lord Mountmorres, an Irish nobleman, of ancient family and title, but of extremely impoverished estate, whose rent-roll numbered but fifteen tenants, and these merely of small holdings. His lordship's whole income from the land was only £300 a year, and his dwelling was a modest house called Ebor Hall, with a space of lawn and wood around it on the slope of the hill, overlooking the beautiful expanse of Lough Corrib and its multitude of picturesque islands. Here, with his wife and children, resided this poorest of country gentlemen, living in the plainest style, hopeless of improving his fortunes, and deprived by comparative indigence of the enjoyment of social pleasures and



FARMING UNDER POLICE PROTECTION IN COUNTY MAYO.



A QUIVER FULL.



GROUP OF BOYCOTTERS.



FATHER O'MALLEY AT HOME.



DEPARTURE OF THE BOYCOTT RELIEF VOLUNTEERS FROM LOUGH MASH HOUSE.



A SWEET YOUTH.

honours befitting his rank. Of a quiet, homely, studious disposition, and willing to do all the good possible among his humblest neighbours, he had acquired some medical skill, which he practised gratuitously for their benefit, thus by his personal exertions making up for his inability to give or spend money in relieving their frequent needs. His few tenants had ever found him a considerate and indulgent landlord. But his position, not his personal character or conduct, made him a mark for the class hatred systematically provoked by the Land League; and singled him out for a violent and cruel death.

The crime was perpetrated about eight o'clock in the evening of the 25th of September last year, on the road between Clonbur and Ebor Hall. The unfortunate nobleman was alone, driving his own car, on his way home from a magistrates' meeting at Clonbur. The road, bounded on each side by uneven stone walls, lies between low hills and broken rocky ground, affording a convenient lurking-place. On an eminence about a mile from Clonbur the assassin appears to have waited, and as Lord Mountmorres drove past, within arm's length of the wall, six shots, all taking effect, were discharged at him from a revolver. Death must have been instantaneous, from the nature of the wounds. The facilities for the escape of the murderer were ample. A range of mountains rises about a quarter of a mile from the road on the one hand; while on the other a stretch of rocky undulating ground sweeps down to the shores of Lough Corrib, across which, escape in a boat could be readily accomplished.

When Lord Mountmorres fell from the car, the horse continued on its way, and reached the lodge, where it stopped. The gate was opened and the horse and car were brought in, but there was no driver. At first this did not cause any apprehension, as it was thought his lordship might have alighted to walk down the hill. But, some minutes having elapsed without his appearing, the servants went in search of him with a lamp.



IRREPRESSIBLE.



TROOPS ESCORTING BOYCOTT RELIEF VOLUNTEERS FROM LOUGH MASK TO BALLINROBE.

When they had gone about two miles they discovered his body lifeless and riddled with bullets, lying on the roadway in a pool of blood. The revolver which he carried was found in his breast-pocket; three chambers were loaded and two unloaded, but the latter did not appear to have been recently discharged. He had evidently not had a chance of defending himself.

A shocking token of either the state of feeling or the gross superstition prevailing in the neighbourhood was furnished by the conduct of Hugh Flanagan and his family, who lived in a cottage 200 or 300 yards from the scene of the murder. The servants having fetched the police, a medical man was called to examine the body, still lying in the road. He thought he detected a pulsation, and directed that the body should be removed to the nearest house. It was therefore taken to Flanagan's, but he at once refused it admission on the pretence that "if it was admitted, nothing belonging to him would be alive that day twelve months." The Flanagans even refused to allow the body to be carried into an outhouse, and it had to be left in the

yard until a car was procured, on which it was removed to Ebor Hall.

THE OSTRACISING OF CAPTAIN BOYCOTT.

ALMOST simultaneously with the murder of Lord Mountmorres, a somewhat extraordinary state of affairs arose in the neighbourhood of Ballinrobe, on the shores of Lough Mask, not far from the locality where the above unfortunate nobleman met with his cruel death. Captain Boycott, resident agent for the estates of Lord Erne, was subjected to constant threats of violence. At the bidding of the Land League all his labourers had refused to work any longer for him, and his crops were spoiling for want of hands to gather them in. The unpopular agent was everywhere attended by an armed escort, and had a garrison of ten constables on his premises, some established in a hut, and the rest in that part of Lough Mask House adjacent to the old castle. Garrisoned at home and escorted abroad, Mr. Boycott and his family were finally reduced to a single female

domestic. Everybody else had gone away, protesting sorrow, but alleging that the power brought to bear upon them was greater than they could resist. Farm labourers, workmen, herdsmen, stablemen, all went, leaving the corn standing, the horses in the stable, the sheep in the field, the turnips, swedes, carrots, and potatoes in the ground. The landress refused to wash for the family any longer; the baker at Ballinrobe was afraid to supply them with bread, and the butcher feared to send them meat. The state of siege was perfect.

A visitor to the locality at this epoch described a sight encountered by him on his arrival, which he justly remarked was not to be paralleled in any other civilized country. "Beyond a turn in the road," observed he, "was a flock of sheep, in front of which stood a shepherdless heaving them back, while a shepherd in a leather shooting jacket aided by a bull terrier, was driving the sheep through a gate into an adjacent field. Despite her white woollen shawl and the work she was engaged upon, it was quite evident, from her voice and manner, that the shep-



CAPTAIN BOYCOTT ON THE ROAD TO CLAREMORRIS RAILWAY STATION.



BOYCOTTING A TRADESMAN IN IRELAND.

herdless was of the upper class, and the shepherd, albeit dressed in a leather jacket, carried himself with the true military air. Both were obviously amateurs at sheep-driving, and the smart, intelligent bull-terrier was as much an amateur as either of them, for shepherd, shepherdless, and dog were only doing what a good collie would achieve alone and unaided. Behind the shepherd were two tall members of the Royal Irish Constabulary in full uniform and with carbines loaded. As the shepherd entered the field the constables followed him everywhere at a distance of a few yards. All his backings and fillings, turnings and doublings, were followed by the armed policemen. This combination of the most proverbially peaceful of pursuits with

carbines and buckshot was irresistibly striking, and the effect of the picture was not diminished by the remarks of Captain and Mrs. Boycott, for the shepherd and shepherdess were no other than these."

Captain Boycott had been farming at Lough Mask for seven years, besides acting as Lord Erne's agent. He had had on his own account a few difficulties with his workpeople; but these were tidied over by concessions on his part, and all went smoothly till the serving of some notices upon the tenants of Lord Erne. A process-server and his escort retreated on Lough Mask House, followed by a mob, and on the following day all the farm servants were ordered to leave Mr. Boycott's employ-

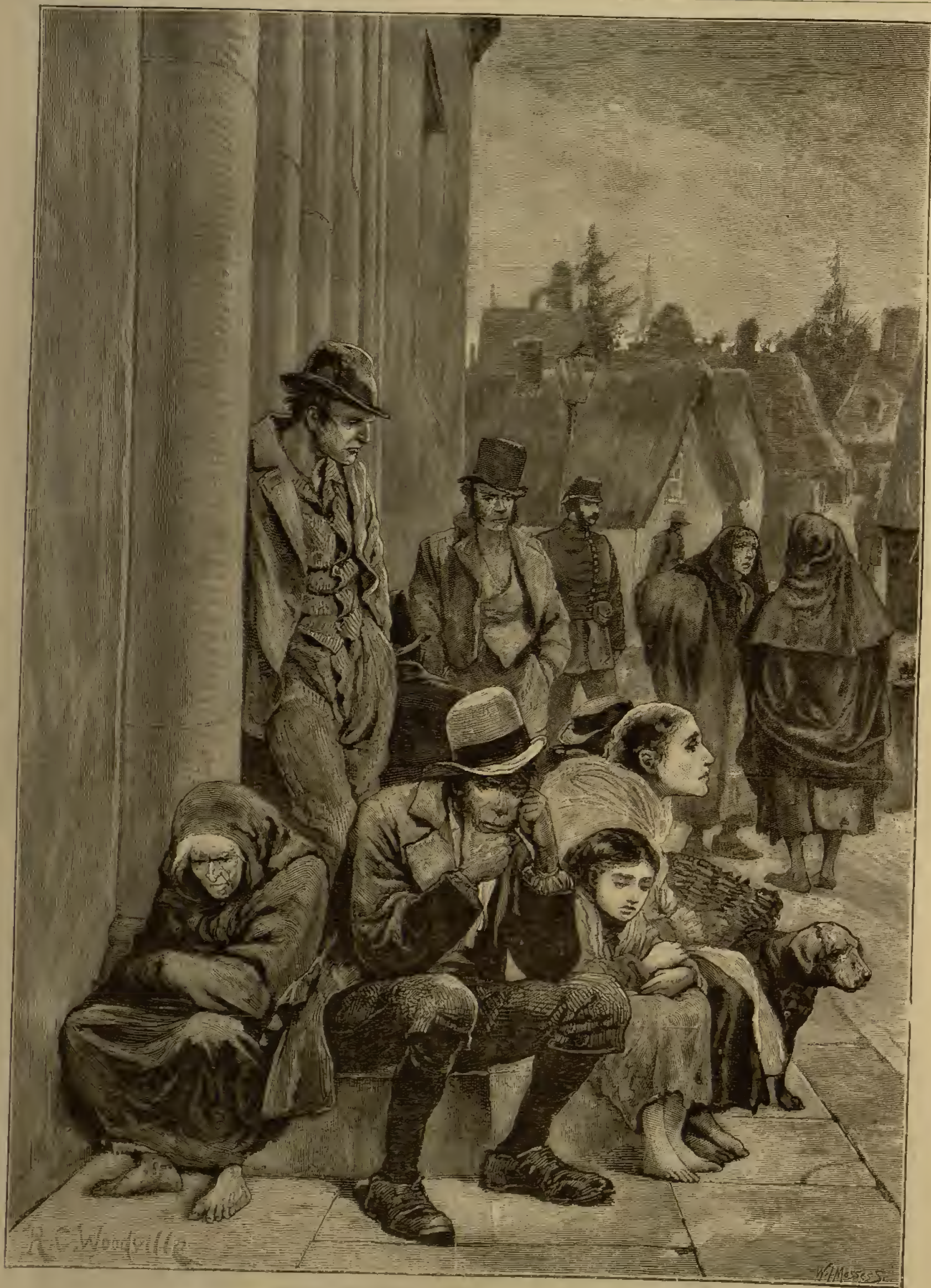
ment. All the weight of the tenants' vengeance had fallen upon the unfortunate agent, whom the irritated people declared they would "hunt out of the country."

VOLUNTEER RELIEF CORPS AT LOUGH MASK.

THE means adopted at the bidding no doubt of the Land League to drive Captain Boycott out of the country having become known in Dublin, and in Ulster, it was proposed by those who sympathised with Captain Boycott's distressed condition, to send a large party of volunteer labourers, well armed for their own defence, to perform all the work that was



INTERDICTING A LAND LEAGUE MEETING AT BROOKBOROUGH, COUNTY FERMANACH.



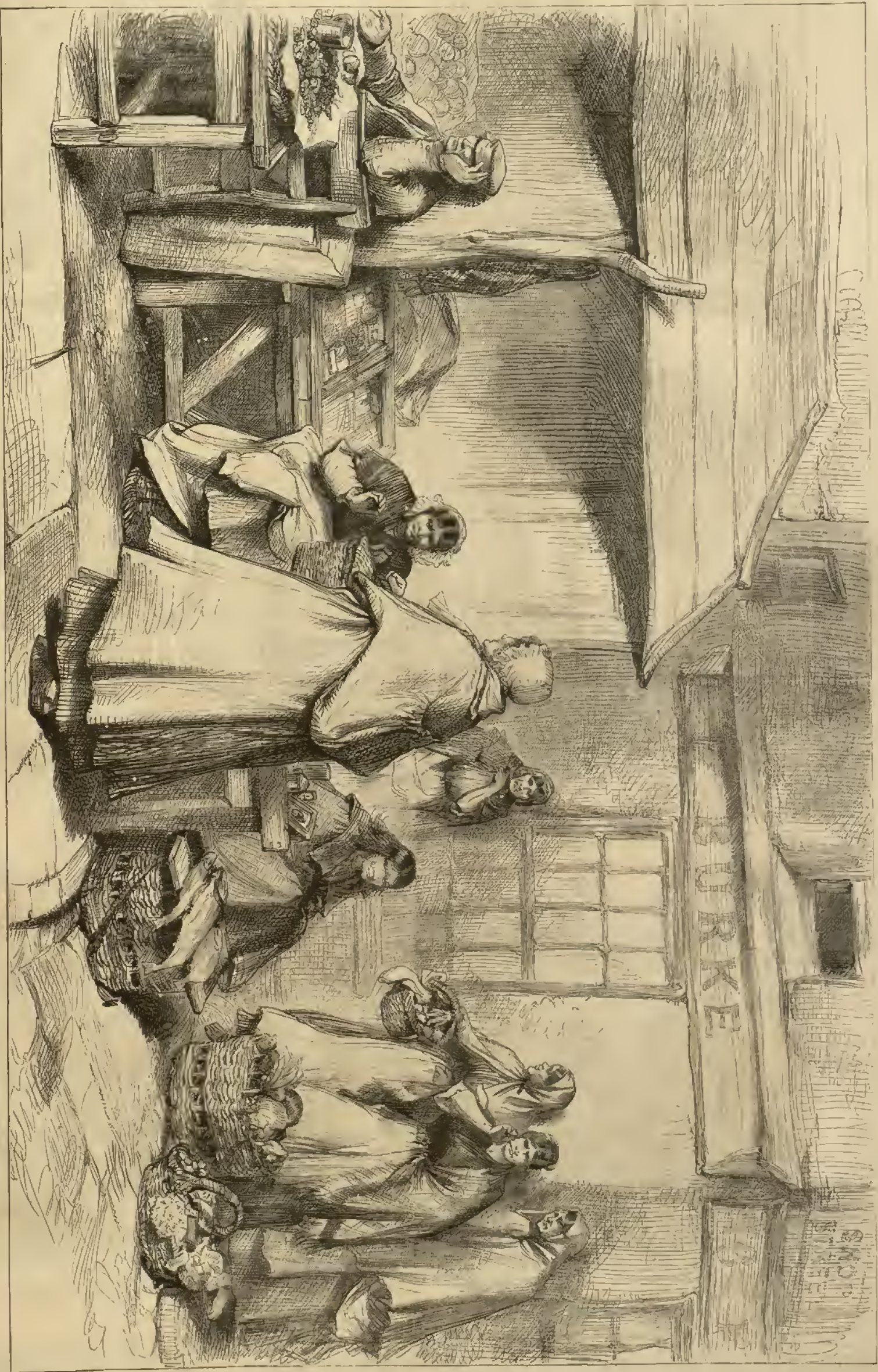
DESTITUTE PEASANTS WAITING OUTSIDE THE GALWAY COURT-HOUSE.

necessary. Five hundred men were enlisted in the service, but the authorities at Dublin interposed, fearing that the arrival of so large a number of strangers would lead to a sort of private war, as they would certainly be encountered by still greater numbers of the Mayo peasantry. The party was therefore restricted to fifty men, from Cavan and Monaghan, led by Mr. Somerset Maxwell, Mr. Godlard, a Dublin solicitor, and Mr. Manning, land agent; while a large military force, comprising a squadron of hussars, and detachments of the 84th and 176th regiments, and of the Army Service corps, was sent from Dublin for the protection of the working party. The troops on reaching Ballinrobe were joined by a force of the Royal Irish Constabulary, also bearing arms, and an ample guard was placed around Captain Boycott's house and grounds. On the arrival of the Ulster men, the following day, they were escorted by the military to Lough Mask House, and a regular encamp-

ment was formed with thirty tents, all requisite campaigning furniture and stores having been provided by Government. The commanding officer of the troops, Lieutenant-Colonel F. E. Wilson, was accompanied by Colonel Bruce, of the Constabulary, and by three of the local stipendiary magistrates, whose charge it is to keep the Queen's peace in the district. They were gladly welcomed by Captain and Mrs. Boycott, who, with their children and nephew, had been enduring real privations, being hardly able to get so much as a loaf of bread from the village. The crops to be saved consisted of ten acres of potatoes, seven acres of mangold, eight of turnips, and twenty acres of wheat, besides some oats, worth altogether about £500 or £600. The Ulster men, who were mostly sons of farmers, went diligently to work, under the protection of the military and constabulary, to get in all the crops, and to thresh the oats and corn for Captain Boycott.

RETURN OF THE RELIEF CORPS—DEPARTURE OF CAPTAIN BOYCOTT.

THEIR labours duly accomplished, spite of the bitter wintry weather to which they had been exposed, the men of the volunteer relief corps proceeded to return to their homes, from which they had been absent upwards of a fortnight. After taking leave of Captain Boycott and his family at Lough Mask House, they set off escorted by troops on their march to Ballinrobe. Early the following morning they were followed by Captain Boycott and his family, who, under the protection of a military escort, travelled in a covered ambulance waggon, the captain having with him a favourite parrot in its cage. "When the military were withdrawn," (from Lough Mask) wrote Captain Boycott to Mr. Gladstone, "I was compelled to leave with them. Had I not done so, my life would not have been safe for



MARKET WOMEN OF THE OLD TOWN, GALWAY.

one hour. My house is full of furniture, which I cannot remove; my sheep and cattle are insufficiently fenced on two of the farms, and on the others have been driven away, and the land is lying waste. Before I left, hardly a night passed without some injury being done—wells were thrown down, gates had their locks broken, and every other havoc was done which the people could commit. I learn, also, from the public prints that the hay has been carried away and made use of by those who stole it since I left my house. The circumstances which compelled me to leave Mayo prevent my return. There is an absolute absence of law there; and if I ventured back it would be to find the same system which drove me out still in force,

and I should be unable to pursue my business or protect my property."

AMONG THE BOYCOTTING BOYS.

MR. WALLIS MACKAY who furnishes some sketches among the boycotting boys, writes *quoyne* of them, that "the absence of the 'boys'—as all male human creatures between the ages of four and fourscore are termed,—on the occasion of the departure of Captain Boycott with the Ulster volunteer harvestmen and the 'English army' was in compliance with the wishes of the Land League and the parish priest. When one did come

across a group of these Boycotters, they were standing silently and with a sullen determination in their looks; and are all but at all unlike Spanish peasants in appearance; and are all but stalwart fellows, comfortably and warmly clad. Whatever reverence the 'boys' were bent upon observing, the women and girls were not in all cases disposed to hold their peace. One lady, who was carrying away for fuel purposes a large piece of a tree that had been blown down by the hurricane the night before the match, let the Queen and her 'hungry army,' and Boycott, and, indeed, everyone within hearing, get the full benefit of a rich flow of invective.

"The now celebrated Father O'Malley has a powerful influence

in this part of the country. I visited him at his house, which is situated next the Catholic chapel, on the road between Ballinrobe and Cong. I found him a thorough specimen of an Irish parish priest; and, though evidently suffering acutely from rheumatism, he was full of humour. He is the originator of the term 'boycotting.' This he invented because he was of opinion that the word 'ostracisation' was of too formidable a character for the use of his flock. He is a charming conversationalist, and hospitable to a degree. The ingenious excuses of inclement weather and long journeys that he made in order to induce his guests to taste his whisky so early in the day, were droll, clever, and amusing.



On the Quay Galway



A Claddagh boy making twine

Connemara Women



Harry Furness

The Claddagh

SKETCHES IN GALWAY.

"This time of the year is the idle period with the Boycotters—if, indeed, they are ever anything else but idle. They stand always with their backs to a wall, and pull away at their 'dub-deens,' or short pipes, in moody silence for hours; they go to bed at dusk, and rise again about ten or eleven in the day. There are some wonderful specimens of the genus vagabond amongst them. These are to be met swinging along lonely roads, evidently bent on some mission or purpose—what, goodness knows.

"My carman told me that every man that could boast a coat, or a pair of breeches, had a revolver concealed about him. Just fancy the sweet youth whose portrait I have dotted down, with a

six-shooter at his disposal! The revolver has undoubtedly superseded the shillelagh in Ireland; and a row at a modern Donnybrook would be more like a squabble in the wilds of Nevada than anything else. This revolver business is due to the influence of the American element amongst the leaders of the people.

"Like other poor districts of Ireland, Mayo is wealthy in one thing, and that is children; they can be seen at every cottage, if not disporting on the dung-heap before the door, burrowing like little rabbits in the parental parlour, or in the pigsty."

The system of Boycotting, or refusing to have any dealings,

or to hold any intercourse with those whom the Land League decided should be ostracised, spread with wonderful rapidity through the disturbed districts of Ireland, and the local bellman was even called into requisition to give notice of the names and offences of individuals who were to be subjected to this cowardly treatment. The speedy prosecution and conviction, however, of several of these functionaries, arrested in a marked degree the rapid strides the Boycotters were making.

A LAND LEAGUE MEETING SUPPRESSED.

THE meetings of the Land League having frequently had for their object the holding up of private individuals to the



SKETCHES IN GALWAY.

execration of their neighbours, the Government eventually determined to interfere, and prohibited all meetings called for any such purpose, or which might possibly lead to a disturbance of the public peace. One of the earliest meetings of this kind which was suppressed, was attempted to be held at Brookborough, county Fermanagh. On this occasion Mr. Rodolphus Harvey, of Enniskillen, stipendiary resident magistrate, having thrice read the Riot Act, and being assisted by a constabulary force, drove the people out of the field where the platform was in course of erection. The two delegates from the Land League, Mr. James O'Kelly, M.P. for Roscommon, who is also correspondent of the *New York Herald*, and Mr. Kettle, from Dublin, were turned

out by Mr. Harvey in a very summary manner. He took the first-named gentleman by the shoulders, and handed him over to the custody of a constable, who quickly removed him from the ground. There was no attempt at resistance, as it was known that a squadron of dragoons was quartered in the town.

GALWAY SKETCHES.

AMONG the sketches made in county Galway is one depicting a painful scene—the patient waiting of groups of starving people outside the Galway court-house in the hope of receiving their customary doles of Indian corn meal from the relief committee sitting there. The other Galway sketches showing

the market women in the old booths, the groups on the quay the men and women of that native Irish ghetto known as the Claddagh, the scene in the fish market, and the street loungers gossiping over the general state of affairs, are as characteristic and truthful as they are picturesque. The Claddagh is a cluster of rude cabins on the beach, where several thousand poor people, mostly boatmen or fishermen, or coasting sailors, dwell quite apart from the townfolk, cherishing their own habits and customs, and speaking their own language. It is said that they have, like the gipsies had till of late years, a code of laws and form of government administered by an elective monarch who is called in Galway "the King of Claddagh," and who is yearly



Antiquated Four Court Guinea-pigs



Reading the account of the Trials



Sketch of the foot of Nelson's Pillar



Cheering an Agitator

SKETCHES IN DUBLIN.

DUBLIN SCENES.

PROMINENT among these Dublin scenes is one which belongs to past history, and not to the contemporary social and political crisis. It refers to the corrupt system formerly practised in the selection of special jurors for Crown prosecutions. "It was known," says Sir C. Gavan Duffy, "that a small knot of broken-down citizens, of safe politics, were enabled to live by this trade. They were always in Court; their confederates in the Sheriff's Office and the Crown Offices knew they were to be relied upon; and they went into the jurors' room to earn the fee paid in such cases with as much regularity as the Sheriff's

bailiffs took their places outside." The venal and subservient special jurymen, referred to by Sir C. Gavan Duffy, were called "Four-Court guinea-pigs," in allusion to the amount of their regular fee, and to the well-known "Four Courts," on the Dublin Quays—a fine range of buildings, erected towards the end of the last century, where all the highest judicial business of Ireland is transacted. The other sketches depict various groups of loungers in the streets and on the quays, mostly under the influence of the existing political excitement, although the gentlemen congregated at the foot of Nelson's pillar are apparently absorbed in no more important subject of cogitation than their own noble selves.